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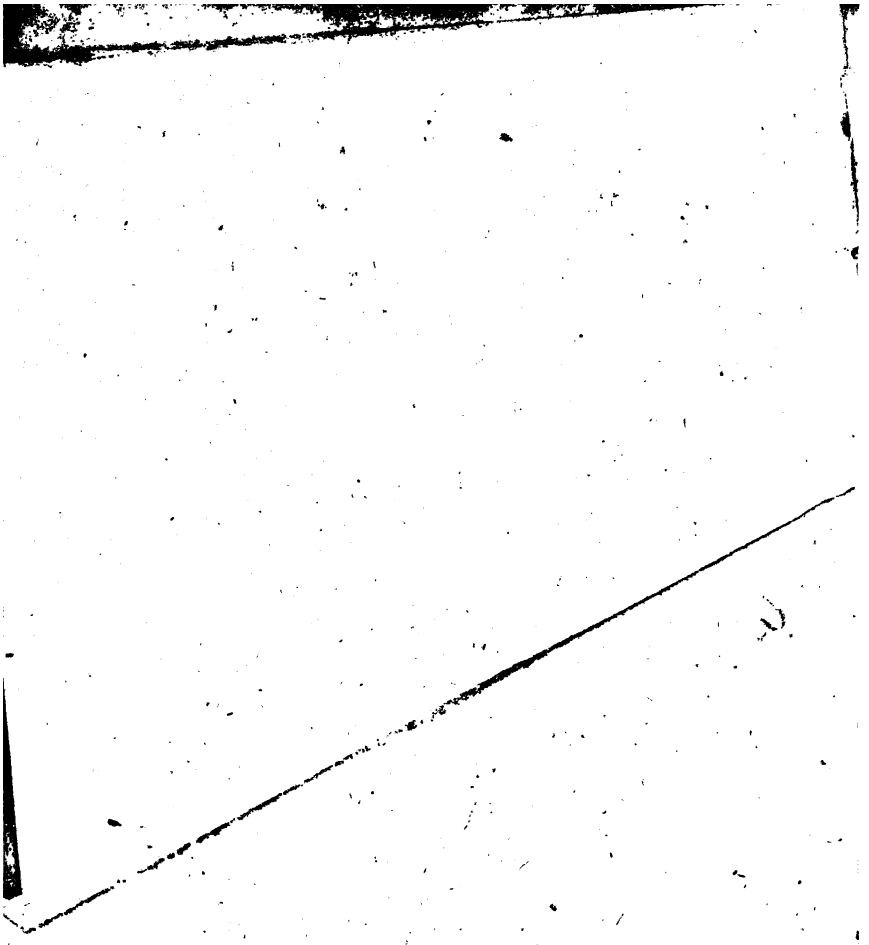

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THE

WHOLE WORKS

L80-174

OF THE

REV. EBENEZER ERSKINE,

MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL AT STIRLING.

CONSISTING OF

SERMONS AND DISCOURSES,

ON IMPORTANT AND INTERESTING SUBJECTS.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

AN ENLARGED MEMOIR OF THE AUTHOR,

BY THE

REV. D. FRASER,

MINISTER OF THE UNITED ASSOCIATE SYNOD, KENNOWAY, FIFE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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PREFACE.

READER,

THE following sermon having made a great noise through this and several other corners of the land; lest any should think the author is ashamed of his doctrine he there delivered, he allows it to come abroad to the world with the last sermon in the preceding volume. He had begun to preach from that text, Is. ix. 6, in November 30, 1731; and having spoken to the first two clauses, he took occasion, June 4, 1732, namely Sabbath evening, after the celebration of the sacrament at Stirling, to insist upon the clause immediately following, *The government shall be upon his shoulder*, as he has been insisting upon the following part of the verse ever since.

Some were of opinion, that the subject was unsuitable to the occasion, after people had been at a communion-table. But it would appear, that such as think so, do not consider, that Christ did wade to the throne and government of his mediatory kingdom through blood. For my part, I do not know how one can be better entertained, either at, or immediately after he has been at the Lord's table, showing forth his death, than by letting him know, that *he who was dead is now alive, and lives for evermore, having the keys of hell and death in his hand.* What more comfortable to a believer, than to hear that the *Lamb slain* is now *in the midst of the throne*, with the reigns of government in his hand, especially, *in a day of trouble, and of treading down, and of perplexity from the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision?*

Others judged it amiss on such an occasion, to touch upon the

act of assembly respecting the settlement of vacant congregations, which had been passed a few days before. All that is needful to be said in answer to which is, that the public wound given by that act was fresh, and the hearts of the poor people of God bleeding, to see themselves spoiled by those who should have been the guardians of their spiritual rights and privileges; and what could be more proper than to panse the green wound, and pour in some of the healing balsam of gospel-consolation, arising from the government of their great King, who rules in the midst of his enemies?

The author never pretended to deliver every particular word or sentence contained in his notes, which to him would be the greatest slavery and confinement. But as the sermon stood in his notes, so it comes abroad; and he supposes that there will be but very inconsiderable variations. Only, the preamble, when he entered upon the text, is added, without which it would have looked somewhat abrupt; besides something he had not time that evening to overtake, at the end of the discourse. He preached two other sermons on the same clause of the verse, the Sabbath following, which there was no time to transcribe for the press, otherwise the discourse might have been more perfect, and the omissions quarrelled by some been supplied.

SERMON XIX.

THE GOVERNMENT UPON CHRIST'S SHOULDER.*

For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace.—Isa. ix. 6.

The great design of God, in his whole works of creation and providence, is to manifest and make known the glory of his power, wisdom, goodness, and greatness to the children of men: hence says David, (Psalm xix. from the beginning,) "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge." And if it be asked, What the great design of God is in the scriptures? I answer, It is just to bring a lost world to the knowledge of a Saviour, "who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person." All the prophecies, promises, histories and doctrines of the word, point us to him, as the needle in the mariner's compass points to the pole-star: "To him bore all the prophets witness." And when apostles under the New Testament were sent to all nations, with the silver trumpet of the everlasting gospel in their mouths, what was the great theme of their sermons? It was just to make Christ known among the nations; he was the Alpha and Omega of their whole ministry; "it is Christ," says Paul to the Colossians, "whom we preach;" and, writing to the Corinthians, he declares, that "he desired to know nothing among them, but Christ, and him crucified." In short, sirs, our preaching, and your hearing, is in vain, unless we bring you to the knowledge of Christ, and an acquaintance with him; he is "the foundation God hath laid in Zion, and other foundation can no man lay." Our design in preaching, and yours in hearing, should

* Preached on sabbath evening after the sacrament at Stirling, June 4, 1732.

be to make you truly gracious and religious; but how shall ever a man be acquainted with the power of godliness, if he be a stranger to him who is the great mystery of it, even "God manifested in the flesh?" How shall we ever fulfil the law as a covenant, but by acquaintance with him, who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth?" How shall we ever fulfil it as a rule, but by faith in him, who is "the glory of our strength?" And how shall we ever come to God, from whom we are separated, but by him who is "the way, the new and living way," and without whom there is no coming to the Father? So that all the lines of religion meet in him as their centre. That I may commend him to you, I have read this text of Scripture, which is as full of Christ, as any that we meet with in the scriptures of truth: and the more of Christ be in any text, the more marrow and fatness, the more savour and sweetness, will be in it to the soul that knows him. *Unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder, &c.*

The prophet, in the close of the preceding chapter, having spoken of dark and dismal days of trouble and distress, comes, in the beginning of this, to comfort and encourage the hearts of true believers, with the great and good things which were coming in the days of the great Messiah; and there are three great New Testament blessings he descants upon.

1. Great light should spring up to a lost world: ver. 2: "The people that walked in darkness, have seen a great light: they that dwell in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined." This world, particularly of the Gentile nations, before the coming of Christ, was a dungeon of darkness; it was a valley of the shadow of death, for want of the gospel-light; for "where no vision is, the people perish." But by the coming of Christ, whose "goings forth were prepared as the morning," in the dispensation of the everlasting gospel," life and immortality are brought to light;" on which account we in this land may join issue with Zacharias in his song, Luke i. 78, 79: "Through the tender mercy of our God, whereby the day-spring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." Oh that there were a suitable prizing of gospel-light, among those who have it in the external dispensation of it! But, alas! is not that word of Christ too applicable to many, "Light is come into the world, and men have loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil?"

2. A *second* great New Testament blessing the prophet speaks of, is joy in the Lord: ver. 3: "Thou hast multiplied

the nation, and not increased their joy: they joy before thee, according to the joy in harvest, and as men rejoice when they divide the spoil." The holy nation of the New Testament church would be multiplied upon the promulgation of the gospel light, so that Christ should have the "dew of his youth," by the "flowings in of the nations" to the bosom of the church; but yet the carnal joy of Israel should not be thereby increased, like that of the Jews, when they sat under their vines, and under their fig trees, eating the milk and honey of the land of Canaan; yet there should be abundance of spiritual joy in the Lord, which would put more gladness in the hearts of true converts, than the joy of the harvest, or of them that divide the spoil. Observe, That the joy of faith, which terminates in the person, righteousness, fulness of Christ, and the favour of God through him, infinitely exceeds all the carnal mirth and jollity of a transient world, which is but "like the crackling of thorns under a pot;" the joy of faith is a "joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

3. Spiritual liberty and freedom is the *third* New Testament blessing that would follow the great Messiah: ver. 4, 5: "For thou hast broken the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, as in the day of Midian. For every battle of the warrior is with confused noise, and garments rolled in blood, but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." As Gideon was an instrument, in the hand of God, for breaking the heavy yoke of oppression that Midian had wreathed about the neck of Israel of old; so Christ, upon his coming like a mighty champion, should travel in the greatness of his strength, to deliver poor sinners from the hands of all their enemies, sin, Satan, the world, and the curse of a broken law, to which they were in bondage. But yet let it be observed, that there is a great disparity betwixt Gideon's way of rescuing Israel, and Christ's way of delivering his people from their spiritual bondage; for Gideon at that time delivered Israel by the force of carnal arms, "with the confused noise of the warrior, and garments rolled in blood;" but the weapons of Christ's kingdom are not such; no, they "are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." Christ's kingdom is to be reared, and spiritual liberty brought about, by burning and fuel of fire, or "by the Spirit of judgment, and the Spirit of burning," chap. iv. 4; that is, by the power of the Spirit of Christ coming along with the dispensation of gospel light, which would burn up and consume the lusts and corruptions of men, and all the works of the devil, even as fire consumes any combustible matter that is cast into it.

Now, if any should ask who is he, and where is he, that

shall do all these great things? Why, here you have an answer in the words of my text, *For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder,* &c. The prophet, chap. vii. 14, had told them that "a virgin should conceive, and bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Immanuel:" now, says he, this is he that shall do all these great wonderful things on his appearance upon the stage of time; for to us he is born, and to us he is given.

In the words we may notice these things following: (1.) The incarnation of the great Messias; for here the prophet speaks of his birth. (2.) His donation; he is the gift of God to a lost world, *Unto us a son is given.* (3.) His advancement to the supreme rule and authority, *The government shall be upon his shoulder.* (4.) His character and designation, in five names here given him, which shows that he has a name above every name, *Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace.* (5.) We have the relation he stands in to lost sinners of Adam's family; he is born *to us,* he is given *to us,* and not to the angels which fell. (6.) We have the application and triumph of faith upon all this; for the church here lays claim to him, and triumphs in her claim; for the words are uttered in a way of holy boasting, *Unto* us this *child is born, unto* us this *son is given;* much like the triumph of the spouse, Cant. v. 16: "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem;" as if she had challenged the whole world to show his match. I have discoursed already of the first two of these particulars, and now I go on to the third, namely, the authority with which Christ is vested in the church, by his Father's ordination, *The government shall be upon his shoulder.*

Sirs, you have been this day travelling with him to Golgotha and Calvary, where you might see him bearing his cross, yea, nailed to it, and pouring out his soul unto death, in a way of satisfaction to justice for our sins. But now I would lead you to mount Sion, that you may view him swaying the sceptre of heaven; for the government is laid upon his shoulder, the Father hath put all things into his hand for the good of his church. What is needful for the explication of those words, will occur in speaking this doctrine.

Doct.—"That as the church is Christ's peculiar kingdom in this world; so the government of it is, by the Father's ordination, committed to him, or laid upon his shoulder."

For confirmation of the doctrine, I need only repeat the words of the text, though many other scriptures might be adduced, which, to gain time, I wave at present, *Unto us a Child*

is born, unto us a Son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder.

In discoursing on which doctrine, through divine assistance, I shall endeavour to do these things:

I. I would offer a few thoughts respecting the church, or kingdom of Christ in the world.

II. Speak a little of the government of his kingdom.

III. How it is committed to him by his Father.

IV. Why it is committed to him, or laid upon his shoulder.

V. Apply.

I. The first thing is, to *offer a few thoughts respecting the church, or kingdom of Christ in this world.*

1. Then, By the church I understand the remnant of Adam's family, who, being determined to break their covenant with hell, and their agreement with death, join themselves to Christ, as their prophet, priest, and king, either in reality, or by a visible and credible profession of their faith in him. This remnant of Adam's family, as they are scattered through the world, make the church universal: and any particular member of this, whether in a nation, congregation, or family, are called particular churches, national, parochial, or domestic; but still these are but branches of the church universal, which makes the mystical body of Christ in the world.

2. The church or kingdom of Christ, during the Old Testament dispensation, was peculiarly confined to the posterity of Abraham, to the nation of the Jews, excepting a few Gentile proselytes; but now, since the coming of Christ in the flesh, and his resurrection from the dead, is extended also to the Gentile nations, according to Psal. ii. 8: The partition-wall being removed, and the door of faith opened to the Gentiles, Christ is now set for an ensign to the Gentile world: Is. xi. 10: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious."

3. All the subjects of Christ's kingdom and government, are originally brought out of the territories of hell, being "children of wrath, even as others." Every man by nature comes into this world wearing the devil's livery of original sin, and of a depraved nature, till Christ, in a day of power, come and set the captive of the mighty at liberty; the strong man keeps the house, till Christ, who is the stronger, enter in and spoil him of his goods, and translate the poor soul from the power of darkness into his kingdom of light.

4. The great engine by which Christ rears up a kingdom

to himself in the world, is the preaching of the everlasting gospel, accompanied with the power and efficacy of his Spirit. This is called "the rod of his strength," by which he makes "a willing people." The gospel is "the power of God unto salvation;" and it is by these weapons which "are not carnal, but mighty through God," he casts down strong-holds.

5. The church and kingdom of Christ being founded and governed by him, "in whom all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid," cannot miss of being one of the best regulated societies in the world as under his management, whatever irregularities may be found in her through the corruptions of men intermingling with the concerns of the kingdom. The church, because of her comely order and regularity, and as she is moulded by her King in the midst of her, is compared to a city lying four-square, Rev. xxi.; she is said to be "comely as Jerusalem, beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth." Every thing necessary to render any kingdom or society regular, is to be found in the church or kingdom of Christ. As,

1*st*, A kingdom well constituted has its laws; and so has the church of Christ. And the laws given by her King are all *holy, just, and good;* and all the true subjects of the kingdom delight in the laws of their King, as being the transcript of infinite wisdom and equity.

2*dly*, A kingdom has its officers under its king; and so has the church of Christ; for "he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ," Eph. iv. 11—13. And it is by his officers, or office-bearers, that you have been served this day at his table, according to his direction.

3*dly*, A kingdom has its courts, where the subjects attend to receive the will of the king, and the benefits of his administration; and so has the church. David, speaking of the Old Testament church, and particularly of Jerusalem, a type of the New Testament church, tells us, "There are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David, whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord, unto the testimony of Israel." The church of Christ, even the church militant, has her courts for government, where the key of discipline is exercised; and her courts for worship, where the doctrine, the ordinances of worship, are dispensed.

4*thly*, A kingdom has its seal: we hear frequently of the broad seal of the kingdom, which is commonly appended to

charters for their confirmation. So in the kingdom of Christ, he has appended two public seals to the charter of his covenant of grace, namely, baptism, and the Lord's supper; the last of which we have been this day dispensing to you, for the confirmation of your faith, as to the validity of the charter: and happy for ever is that man who has got the internal seal of the sacrament, and privy seal of the Holy Spirit with it; for he is "sealed to the day of redemption."

5thly, A kingdom commonly has its enemies to grapple with, both foreign and intestine; and so has the kingdom of Christ. The gates of hell, and its auxiliaries, have in all ages been attempting to overthrow the kingdom of Christ in the world; the dragon with his angels and armies make war against Michael and his angels: and the war between the seed of the woman and the seed of the serpent, like that betwixt Amalek and Israel, will never end while the world stands. But besides foreign enemies, the church of Christ has to deal with intestine enemies, corrupt officers, members, and ministers, pretending to build, and yet causing the work to cease, in as far as in them lies. Yea, the true subjects of this kingdom of Christ, have the enemy of a deceitful and corrupt heart within them, that is ready to join hand with the enemy that is more foreign. The kingdom of Christ is a theatre of continual war, from the disturbances perpetually created by some of these enemies, and will be militant while in this world; "for we wrestle not against flesh and blood" only, "but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places:" and you who have been this day at the banqueting house, provide and prepare for the battle, &c.

6thly, A kingdom has its armies and auxiliaries; and so has the church of Christ, being in a confederacy with the Lord of hosts. The armies of heaven are ready to fight her quarrel, and to step into the assistance of the true believer, who is endeavouring to fight the good fight of faith, under the conduct of the Captain of salvation. And because all the subjects are soldiers, here is a suitable military equipage provided for them, "the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation," &c.

7thly, A kingdom has its fortifications and strong-holds; and so has the church of Christ: Is. xxvi. 1: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah; We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." The strong ramparts of the kingdom are the divine attributes; for "as the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord encompasseth them that fear him." A God in Christ is the church's refuge, Psal. xlvi. 1: "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble."

II. The *second* thing was, to *speak a little of the government and administration of the kingdom.* What I have to offer as to this, take in the following particulars:—

1. Christ himself, you see in the text, is the great and glorious Governor; *The government shall be upon his shoulder,* Psal. ii. 6: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Mic. v. 2: "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me, that is to be Ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Mic. ii. 13: "And their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." Eph. i. 22, 23: "He hath given him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Oh how may the church of believers pride themselves in their King and Governor, saying, "The Lord is our defence, the holy One of Israel is our King: in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory!"

2. All things in heaven, earth, and hell, are put under the power of Christ, for the more advantageous government of his church. See Eph. i. 22, 23, just now quoted, and Phil. ii. 9—11. So that not only the government of the church, but the government of angels, men, and devils, of all things visible and invisible, are in the hand of Christ for the sake of his church. Hence is that promise or article of his latter-will, Rom. viii. 28: "All things work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

3. Christ, the King of Zion, is wonderfully fitted by his Father for the government and administration. You read of his qualifications for it, Is. xi. 2—4: "And the Spirit of the Lord shall rest upon him, the Spirit of wisdom and understanding, the Spirit of counsel and might, the Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord: and shall make him of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, and he shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears. But with righteousness shall he judge the poor, and reprove with equity, for the meek of the earth: and he shall smite the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked." Oh! where was there ever such a well qualified Governor? It is impossible he can err in his administration. And what sweetens this is, that the qualifications of the King are communicable, and actually communicated to all the loyal subjects of the kingdom; for he is not only a head of government, but of influences: for "out of his fulness *do* all we receive, and grace for grace."

4. Christ's government and administration is very wonderful and surprising; you see here that the name of the Governor is *Wonderful*. He is wonderful in his person, and wonderful in his administration; for, by his skill of management in his kingdom, he brings light out of darkness, order out of confusion, life out of death, strength out of weakness: and therefore the subjects may be easy amidst the greatest apparent confusions, even though the mountains were removing, and heaven and earth mingling; for he is "the Lord that doth wonders, and rules even in the raging of the sea," &c.

5. Christ's government and administration in and about his church and people is exceedingly wise; so much is imported in his being called the *Counsellor*. "Wisdom and counsel are his;—there is no searching out of his understanding." The deepest laid plots of hell are all open before him; for "he discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death;" he rules in the midst of his enemies, and turns all their counsels to foolishness. And as for his loyal subjects, "he will guide them by his counsel, and afterward bring them to glory."

6. Christ's government and administration is irresistible; for the Governor is "The mighty God," who will go through with his designs: "Who can stay his hand, or say unto him, What dost thou? *O* let mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad;" for her King in the midst of her is mighty, yea, the almighty God, who is able to protect his servants, and is both able and resolved to destroy his enemies: "Strong is his hand, and high is his right hand; and his right hand doth ever valiantly." How valiantly did he spoil principalities and powers on the cross? And he is as valiant as ever.

7. Christ, in the government of his church and people, is exceedingly tender and compassionate; for his name is "The everlasting Father," with whom "compassions flow;" and his "mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him.—As a father pitieth his children: so the Lord pitieth them that fear him.—He gathers the lambs in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young." And "in him the fatherless findeth mercy. He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax."

8. Christ's government and administration of his church is very peaceable; for his name is *The Prince of peace*, and "of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end." It is true, he has told his subjects, that "in the world they shall have tribulation, but yet in him they shall have peace," for "he hath overcome the world;" and the peace he

gives is such as the world can neither give nor take away; John xiv. 27: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you."

9. This government is everlasting; for, "of the increase of his government there shall be no end. His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion that which shall not be destroyed: his seed shall endure for ever, and his throne built up to all generations." Other kings die, and their kingdoms moulder away into nothing; but he is "the King eternal, immortal," and his kingdom endureth for ever. "Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever: the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.—Judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne:" and this is what renders his government everlasting, because this King doth rule in righteousness, and his throne is established in justice.

III. The *third* thing was, to *inquire how the government of the church is committed to Christ, or laid upon his shoulder.* Interpreters think, that in this expression there is an allusion to the ancient custom of carrying the ensigns of government upon the shoulders of those who were invested with it, or of their officers. The plain meaning is, that the government and supreme authority of the church, whether militant or triumphant, is devolved upon him." An expression much of the same import you have, Is. xxii. 22: "And the key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut; and he shall shut, and none shall open." Now, the government is committed to Christ, or laid upon his shoulder, with a three or fourfold solemnity.

1. With the solemnity of an unalterable decree: Psal. ii. 6—8: "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion. I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I shall give thee the Heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." Now, can this decree of Heaven be reversed, or these mountains of brass be overturned? No, surely, "The counsel of the Lord shall stand;" and therefore the crown shall stand on the Redeemer's head, *and the government lie upon his shoulder.*

2. With the solemnity of a covenant transacted betwixt him and his eternal Father, when the council of peace was between them both. And what is the issue of that grand council, which was held in heaven, from the ancient ages of eternity? It was just, that *the man, whose name is the* BRANCH, should *come out of his place,* that *he* should *bear the glory, and* that *he* should *sit and rule upon his throne,* Zech. vi. 12, 13.

3. With the solemnity of an oath, ratifying the determination of the council of peace in this matter: Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4: "I have made a covenant with my chosen; I have sworn unto David my servant. Thy seed will I establish for ever, and build up thy throne to all generations." And you see, ver. 35, that in his oath he impignorates his holiness, the most orient and dazzling jewel of his crown, for the greater security, "Once have I sworn by my holiness, that I will not lie unto David;" that is, I will as soon cease to be a holy God, as turn my Son out of the government; no, it shall lie upon his shoulder, as long as I am holy, and that is for ever and ever. The government is committed to him by a solemn election and investiture; he was elected to the government by his own Father, and the joint concurrence of all the subjects: Is. xlii. 1: He is, "mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth." Psal. lxxxix. 19, 20: "I have exalted one chosen out of the people. I have found David my servant: with my holy oil have I anointed him." And the whole family of heaven and earth concur in the choice, without a contradictory voice: hence when he mounts the throne, and ascends up on high, they all clap their hands, saying, as Psal. xlvii. 5, 6, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet. Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises." That passage, Rev. v. 11, 12, is thought by some judicious interpreters, particularly the great *Owen*, to have a respect to the reception Christ met with, when he returned to heaven, and sat down on the throne in our nature: "And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands;" and what say they? how cordially do they give their vote, that he should reign? "Saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

IV. The *fourth* thing was, to *give the reasons of the doctrine.* Why is the government laid upon his shoulder? I answer,

1. Because his shoulder alone was able to bear the weight of the administration and government of the church. They who usurp the administration, take too much upon them: it is a burden too heavy for angels or archangels; how then should sinful worms bear it? God the Father saw that none in heaven or earth but his own eternal Son was match for such a province; and therefore commits it to him, with a promise of his own assistance in the government, Psal. lxxxix.

19—21: "I have laid help upon one that is mighty.—I have found him:—I have anointed him.—With whom my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him."

2. It is laid upon his shoulder, or committed to him, that he might be in better capacity for accomplishing the salvation of his people, and bringing many sons and daughters unto glory; hence we find his kingdom and salvation frequently joined together: "Thou art my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth;" and Zech. ix. 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold thy King cometh unto thee; he is just, and having salvation. Let his kingdom be ever so low, his subjects in the worst of bondage and misery, whether as to the external or internal man, if their Governor and King give but the word of command, immediately deliverance comes; Psal. xliv. 4: "Thou art my King, O God, command deliverances for Jacob." His command dried up the Red Sea, divided Jordan, and brought Israel into the promised land.

3. The government is laid upon his shoulder, that he may "still the enemy and the avenger," that he may resent his Father's quarrel against Satan, and entirely bruise his head, for his defacing and striking at his and his Father's image in our first parents, and disturbing his government, which he had established in innocence. Christ's great business, when he appeared in this world in person, and when he appears in the dispensation of the gospel, and power of his Spirit, is to destroy the works of the devil, to rear up his own kingdom, in the ruin of the old serpent and his seed. Hence it is, that when he takes the field, he gives the shout of war against that enemy and all that join him, Is. lxiii. 4: "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my Redeemed is come."

4. The government is laid upon his shoulder, or committed to him, because he has a just title to it. As,

1*st*, He has a title to it by birth. He is God's *first-born*, and therefore he will make him "higher than the kings of the earth:" yea, he is "King of kings, and Lord of lords."

2*dly*, He has a title to it by purchase. He hath redeemed his church by his own blood, and therefore has the best right to govern her: his cross was the way in which he came to the crown; he suffered, and then entered into his glory.

3*dly*, He has a right to it by his Father's promise and charter, granted him upon the footing of his death and satisfaction; Is. liii. 12: "Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong: because he hath poured out his soul unto death;" and, Phil. ii. 8—10, we are told, that "because he endured the cross,

and despised the shame, therefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name."

4thly, He has a title to it by conquest. He invades the territories of the god of this world, sets up his standard within his dominions, and spoils principalities and powers, sets the captives of the mighty at liberty, he travels in the greatness of his strength, showing himself mighty to save, subduing sinners, and bringing every thought into captivity to his obedience; and because he doth so, therefore the government is committed to him, and laid upon his shoulder.

V. The *fifth* thing was, the *Application* of the doctrine.

The *first* use may be of *Information* in the following particulars. Is it so, that the government is laid upon the shoulder of the Redeemer by the ordination of the Father? See hence,

1. The wonderful love of God which he bears to his church and people, in providing such a Ruler and Governor for them. I remember the queen of Sheba, 1 Kings x. 9, in her address to Solomon, says, "Because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice." So, well may we say here, because the Lord loved his church and people, therefore he made his own eternal Son King in the midst of her, and laid the government upon his shoulder. O what a wonderful evidence of his love is this! And should not this make the under-governors of the church very tender, and take heed of ruling with rigour, and to be aware of what rulers they set over her?

2. See hence what a happy government and administration believers, the saints of God, are under, namely, the government of the Child born, and the Son given to us, whose name is the *Wonderful, Counsellor*, &c. The queen of Sheba, in the place now cited, 1 Kings x. 9; when she saw the glory of Solomon, and the wisdom of his administration, her spirit fails her; and, (ver. 8,) cries out, "Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom." But "behold a greater than Solomon is here." Solomon, and all his wisdom and glory, was but a faint type of the glory and wisdom of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the glory of his person and administration; and therefore upon far better ground we may say of the subjects of Christ's kingdom, as Moses did of Israel, Deut. xxxiii. 29: "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord, the shield of thy help, and who is the sword of thy excellency!

3. See hence the misery of a wicked unbelieving world, who will not have him to rule over them, on whose shoulder

the government is laid, but break his bands, and cast away his cords from them; why, he that sits in heaven shall laugh at their impotent attempts against the government of his Son, and he hath authorized him to break all that will not bow to his government: "Thou shalt break them as with a rod of iron, thou shalt dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel." Even the great potentates, who will not stoop to him, he will cut them off; for "he cuts off the spirit of princes, and is terrible to the kings of the earth, and strikes them through in the day of his wrath," &c.

4. Is it so that the government is laid upon his shoulder? Then see the nullity of all acts, laws, and constitutions, that do not bear the stamp of Christ, and that are not consistent with the laws and orders he has left for the government of his church. They cannot miss to be null, because Zion's King never touched them with his sceptre, they want a foundation in the word of God; and unless acts and laws are founded there, they have no foundation at all, because there is no church-authority but what is derived from him.

5. See hence that they run a very dangerous risk who do injury to his subjects, or strip them of any of the rights, privileges, or immunities he has granted them, and purchased for them with the price of his blood. Among other privileges which Zion's King has allowed his subjects, this is none of the least, that they should have the choice of their pastors; for which cause he has required them "to try the spirits" and gifts ministers are endowed with, whether they be calculated for the edification of their souls, 1 John iv. 1. It is a command not given to heritors and elders only, but even to little children, young men and fathers: "Beloved," says he, "believe not every spirit, but try the spirits," namely, of ministers and preachers, "whether they are of God:" and the reason he gives is remarkable, in the close of the verse; "Because many false prophets are gone abroad into the world." And in a suitableness to this trying of the spirits of the prophets, we find, Acts vi. that it was "the multitude of disciples," that by express order are commanded to choose out from among them "men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom." The apostles, the extraordinary officers in the church, and who, one would think, were the most competent judges of men full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom; yet they would not take that power upon them, which is now lodged in heritors and elders. I fear, the partiality shown in our public acts, in preferring the great, the noble, "the rich man with the gay clothing," before "the poor of this world," whom generally "God hath chosen, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom," lay a foundation for a controversy between God and this nation, which

will soon be at an end. Christ's little ones are but little regarded now-a-days; but they who maltreat them, to gratify the greatest upon earth, will smart for it in the issue. It is an awful word uttered by him upon whose shoulders the government is laid, Matt. xviii. 6, 7: "But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that a mill-stone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea. Wo unto the world because of offences: for it must needs be that offences come: but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh."

6. If the government be upon his shoulder, then hence I infer, that they have a hard task to manage, who attempt to justle him out of his government, and take it upon their own shoulders.

Quest. Who are these?

I answer, 1*st*, Papists, who set up "the man of sin" to be the head of the church, calling him Christ's vicar. He is Anti-christ, whom Christ will "destroy with the breath of his mouth, and the brightness of his coming."

2*dly*, Prelatists, who set up archbishops, and diocesan bishops, in the church of Christ; officers whom Christ never ordained in his kingdom, or never were warranted by his word. We read of no officer under the New Testament superior to a presbyter; and therefore archbishops and bishops have no warrant in the word, and can be none of the officers of Christ's kingdom.

3*dly*, Erastians, who take the government off Christ's shoulder, and lay it upon the civil magistrate, putting it in his power to cast the government of the church of Christ into what mould and fashion is most agreeable to his worldly interest. What an affront is it done unto the Son of God, to have any mortal man declared head in all cases, not only civil but ecclesiastical? This was a usurpation upon the crown of Christ under some former reigns, which I am afraid is never yet cleanly abrogated or abolished to this day.

4*thly*, Those potentates, who take upon them to tolerate any doctrines or any worship inconsistent with the doctrine, worship, or government Christ has established in his kingdom.

5*thly*, Those professed Presbyterians, who under that disguise exercise a lordly prelacy and dominion over the church of Christ, in thrusting in men upon congregations without, and contrary to, the free choice their King has allowed them. I fear there shall be a sad reckoning ere all be done, for the violent rapes which are committed, upon the spouse of Christ up and down the land. Christ mystical is wounded in the house of his professed friends; and it will be a wonder if

there be not wounds for wounds, before the scene be ended. For,

7. If the government be upon Christ's shoulder, then hence I infer, that all odds will be even, and that Christ will render tribulation, to those that trouble, vex, and harass his poor people, in their spiritual rights and privileges. He will arise for the sighing of the poor, and the cries of the needy; and O when he doth arise, the vengeance of his temple shall fall heavy upon the heads of those who spoil it.

I conclude with a use of *Consolation* to the poor people of God; particularly to those that are spoiled of their liberties and privileges as Christians; for though they be forsaken of them whose business it is to take the greatest care of them, yet they are not forsaken of their God; and our commission leads us particularly "to preach the gospel to the poor, to comfort them that mourn in Zion, to give them beauty for ashes, and the oil of joy for mourning." We are to "strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees." There are these few grounds of consolation I offer you in your present circumstances. As,

1. Your God does not stand as an unconcerned spectator of the injuries that are done you at this day; no, he is observing, and resents the spoils that are committed upon you. You may read for this a challenge, and an awful challenge given on their behalf, Is. iii. 12—15: "As for my people, children are their oppressors, and women rule over them: O my people, they which lead thee, cause thee to err, and destroy the way of thy paths. The Lord standeth up to plead, and standeth to judge the people. The Lord will enter into judgment with the ancients of his people, and the princes thereof: for ye have eaten up the vineyard; the spoil of the poor is in your houses. What mean ye that ye beat my people to pieces, and grind the faces of the poor? saith the Lord God of hosts."

2. Know for your comfort, that God hath founded Zion. This is a topic of consolation, which is particularly presented to the poor of his people, and, accordingly, to be told by the messengers of the nations, Is. xiv. 32: "What shall one then answer the messengers of the nation?" (namely, when they are inquiring about the state and circumstances of God's Israel, in a dark and cloudy day like this.) The answer is, "That the Lord hath founded Zion, and the poor of his people shall trust in it;" that is, Let it be proclaimed to the world, that he who laid the foundation of Zion, will build her up; and when he does so, he will appear in his glory, and his poor people, however disconsolate, shall trust in it as an

unshaken truth, that he who founded Zion, will take care of her, and of those who espouse her cause.

3. Know that he who hath the government upon his shoulder, rules in the midst of his enemies; and has so much of the art of government, that he both can and will bring good out of evil, advantage to his poor people out of things tending to their hurt and prejudice. Jacob's sons conspire against the life of their brother, they sell him into the hands of the Ishmaelitish merchants; they in all this had no other view but to satisfy their lust of revenge; however, God meant it for good, as was proved by the event.

4. Know that the most dark and cloudy-like dispensations towards the church and people of God, are in the event found to have been pregnant with love and mercy; he who hath the government upon his shoulder turns them so about, as they are made to understand his loving-kindness in all these things.

5. Know, for your comfort, that he on whose shoulder the government is laid, has power to provide you with honest ministers, notwithstanding all the bars that lie in the way of your being comfortably provided; yea, his power is cast into a promise, that you may act faith upon it, Is. xxx. 20, 21: "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers; and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left." Jer. iii. 15: "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." Our great Governor has the stars in his right hand, and he calls them forth by name: and therefore "be not afraid, only believe."

But now, to shut up this discourse, I shall, 1. Tell you some of the secrets of Christ's government. 2. Offer a few advices to the Lord's people.

First, A few secrets of Christ's government with respect to his people in this world. As,

1. That his public management in providence seems many times to interfere with his promise; as in the case of Abraham being commanded to sacrifice his son, the promise made of the kingdom to David, &c.

2. His acts of government have a light as well as a dark side. "No affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous; but afterwards it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness."

3. There is a pleasant regularity in all his government, however perplexed it may appear to us; and when the work

is done, beauty will arise out of it, as out of the chaos arose a beautiful world.

4. In his administration he hath long fetches, which we are not able to discover, or see to the end of at first instance; it is only some links, and not the full chain of providence, that lies open to us. God must have his own time to finish his work.

5. His administrations many times take very surprising turns; as when Israel was brought to the borders of Canaan; and they expecting immediately to enter upon the possession of the promised land, and yet are sent back to measure the hills of the wilderness for the space of forty years. When the designs of his administration seem to be brought to the birth, some new occurrence may cast up, which to our view seems to render all abortive.

6. Those acts of his government, which seem to us to portend utter ruin to the church and his kingdom in the world, are found to be the very means for their deliverance and outgate. No step of providence so much hastened Joseph's preferment, as that of his being cast into prison, and laid under fetters of iron. Israel's strait at the Red sea was the time of the Lord's appearing for their delivery, and the ruin of Pharaoh and his host.

Secondly, I conclude with a few advices to the subjects of Zion, especially in this "day of trouble, and treading down."

1. Keep the eyes of faith fixed on him who holds the helm; and believe, with an assured faith, that "the Lord doth reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations." He that reigns is "Immanuel, God with us;" not a God against us, but "with us," or "upon our side:" Psal. xlvi. "The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge; therefore will not we be afraid, though the earth be removed," &c.

2. Keep the promise made to the church in your view, in the midst of the darkest dispensations; and do not pore so much upon what is before you in the course of providence, as upon the promise; for no man can know God's love or hatred, by what is before him; but the promise is the very picture and immediate product of his infinite mind. Asaph, by poring upon the external conduct of providence, is almost carried down the stream, to Atheism and irreligion, (Psal. lxxiii. 13,) till he went to the sanctuary, and consulted the oracles of the word.

3. Wait on the Lord, and do not make haste: "for the Lord is a God of judgment; and blessed are all they that wait for him; they shall not be ashamed."

4. *Lastly,* Commit your way to the Lord; even when you walk in the midst of darkness, trust in the name of the Lord, and stay yourselves upon your God; and so ye shall be kept in perfect peace, and integrity and uprightness shall preserve you. "Keep yourselves in the love and fear of God, looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ," when all the seeming crooks of his government shall be made even.

SERMON XX.

A TREASURE OF GOSPEL-GRACE DIGGED OUT OF MOUNT SINAI; OR, THE SINNER'S CLAIM OF RIGHT CLEARED FROM GOD'S COVENANT WITH ISRAEL AT SINAI.*

I am the Lord thy God.—Thou shalt have no other gods before me.— EXOD. XX. 2, 3.

SOLOMON says, "Where the word of a king is, there is power;" what power then must there be, where the word of God is, who is the King of kings, and Lord of lords! Pray, sirs, notice and consider what is said, ver. 1: "God spake all these words." This is enough to make heaven and earth to listen with the most profound silence and adoration. Is. i. 2: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth, for the Lord hath spoken. The mighty God the Lord hath spoken." And when he speaks, he "calls the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof" to listen, and therefore, "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord. God spake all these words." This is like the sounding of a trumpet before the king's proclamation. God spake all the words of this Bible in a mediate way, by the mouths of his holy prophets and apostles: but here God himself is the immediate speaker: surely it must be some matter of vast moment, and of the highest importance, when God himself is the preacher. Well, what are the words God spake in such an immediate manner; *Answ.* All these words from the 2d verse of this chapter

* Preached at the dispensation of the Lord's Supper, at Kinglassie.

to the close of ver. 17. And, sirs, I would have you to remember, that all these words are spoken as directly to you, and to every soul hearing me, as ever they were to Israel; and you and I are to reckon ourselves no less concerned now to hear and regard them, than if we had been standing at the foot of Sinai among the children of Israel, when the heavenly trumpet sounded, and the voice of God was uttered with such awful majesty as made Moses and all Israel fall to quaking and trembling; for all these words are directed to us, as much as they were to them. And therefore do not shift them, as though they were spoken only to Israel, or as if they were spoken to others and not to you. No, no; to thee, man, to thee, woman, God now speaks all these words in this Bible; and therefore hear and listen, with particular application of them to thy own soul, as if God were calling thee out of heaven, by name and surname. Two of these ten words I design to speak to, namely these, taken in their connexion, *I am the Lord thy God—Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

Where two things are considerable. 1. A great and gracious promise, even the leading promise of the covenant, *I am the Lord thy God.* 2. A great and gracious law or commandment, founded upon the covenant promise and grant; a law, the obligation of which the very light of nature cannot shake off; *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

1. We have a great promise or new covenant-grant; *I am the Lord thy God.* The greatest word ever God spake since the fall of Adam! for here he not only speaks forth his own glory and transcendent being, but he speaks over himself unto us as our God. Here is a promise, yea, something more than a promise. A promise is commonly expressed with respect to the time to come, concerning something God has a mind to do hereafter; but here God speaks in the present time, *I am the Lord thy God;* that is, Now, while I am speaking, from this moment I become your God; and from this time forward you may claim me as such, and hold me to it, by this my grant that I make of myself to you. God's covenant of promise is not a thing past, or a thing to come only; but a thing present; *I am the Lord thy God.* Faith never wants a foundation; no, it is always invariably the same: and if our faith did bear a just proportion to the ground of faith in the covenant, we would not be up and down in our believing; no, we would be always believing, and that with the fullest assurance of faith. There is a twofold title by which God describes himself here in this covenant grant; the one is essential, and the other relative. (1.) The essential title is JEHOVAH; the force of which is opened, Rev. i. 4: "He

that is, that was, and is to come." And it implies his self-existence, that he has his being of himself, independent of all other beings; and that he gives being to all other beings whatever, in heaven above, or in the earth beneath. The Jews think this name so sacred, that they judge it unlawful to pronounce it. It is a name common to each person of the glorious Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, who are one God. Christ is called JEHOVAH, frequently in scripture, as well as Father, Jer. xxiii. 6: "This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH, our righteousness." And we have very good ground to think that it was JEHOVAH, in the person of the eternal Son, who "spake all these" words from the top of Sinai, to Israel, as we may have occasion to clear more fully afterwards. (2.) Another title by which he here describes himself is relative; *thy God.* This is it that sweetens the name of JEHOVAH unto us; he is JEHOVAH *our God.* The terror of his amazing and infinite greatness were enough to affright and astonish all mankind; but when he says, *I am thy God, even thy own God;* not an avenging God, to execute the penalty of the broken law upon thee, but a "God with thee, a God on thy side," to pity, pardon, and defend thee, a "God gracious and merciful, abundant in goodness and in truth;" this, O this! renders his name JEHOVAH amiable and desirable.

2. In the words we have a law or commandment, suited to, and founded upon, this covenant grant; *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* This, as many of the rest of the commandments are, is delivered in negative terms, prohibiting and forbidding, "the denying, or not worshipping and glorifying the true God, as God and *our* God; and the giving of that worship and glory to any other which is due to him alone." And this law, or commandment, as the generality of the other commandments, is delivered in negative terms, because of the perpetual propensity of our natures, since the fall to depart from the living God through an evil heart of unbelief. But although the commandment be delivered in negative terms, yet the contrary positive duty is manifestly included in it, or under it; namely, "to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God; and our God; and to worship and glorify him accordingly," as is well expressed in our Catechism. As for these words, *Before me,* or *before my face,* as it may be read; the expression plainly teaches us, that an omniscient and all-seeing God, before whom all things are open and naked, and who "sets our most secret sins in the light of his countenance," "taketh notice of, and is much displeased with, the sin of having any other God;" and, consequently is well pleased with the sinner who knows and ac-

knowledges him as the only true God, and his own God, according to the gift of the covenant, which is the foundation of our claim to him. From which words,

OBSERVE, "That as God is the Lord and our God by his own free gift in a covenant of grace, so it is his royal will and pleasure, intimated to us in the first commandment of his law, that we should know and acknowledge him to be our own God, upon the ground of that covenant grant.

I have framed the doctrine almost in the words of our Lesser Catechism, opening up the import of this promise and precept. And O that I could make all this company, and the whole world of mankind, if I had access to them, to understand what a glorious and rich treasure they have among their hands when they hear these words repeated, or repeat them themselves, *I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* Alas! there are many have these words by rote, who never consider what is in them: just like a company of people travelling the highway where an immense treasure lies under their feet; they pass and repass it, but miss the treasure, because they never dig into the field; so people read and repeat these words, and lose God and eternal life, that lie hid in them, because they do not advert to what they are saying or reading.

But, O sirs, let me beseech and entreat you, for your souls' sake, to pause a little, and consider what is in these words; *I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* You and I, by the breach and violation of the first covenant, in our father Adam, lost our God; and ever since, every man and woman is "without God in the world;" and being without God, we are "without hope," without help, without grace, light, life, strength, or any thing that is good. When we lost our God, we lost all, and lost it to all intents and purposes. Well, but, sirs, I tell you glad tidings of the greatest joy that ever mankind heard since the fall of Adam; here you have your God, whom you lost by the first covenant, coming back again to you in a new covenant, a covenant of grace, and saying to every one of you, *I am the Lord thy God:* he becomes our God, not upon the footing of works, but of free grace. And because the sinner, through a sense of guilt and wrath, might be ready to scare and say, O, I cannot think that God is speaking to me, when he says, *I am the Lord thy God!* I doubt, may the sinner say, if I be warranted to claim him as my God, who have forfeited all claim and title to him. In answer to this, consider, that a royal law is issued out, yea, the very law of nature, written at first upon Adam's heart, is repeated and adapted to the dispensation of the covenant of

grace, binding and obliging every one, to whom these presents are intimated, to take him as their God in Christ, upon the footing of this new covenant. And it is remarkable, how Infinite Wisdom outwits the policy of hell, *and turns the counsel thereof into foolishness.* Satan ruins man by tempting him to break the law, and so to affront God in his authority and sovereignty. Well, but God takes the very first commandment of that law which Adam broke, and brings it in under a new covenant, the sum of which is this, *I am the Lord thy God:* and so makes that very law subservient to man's recovery, and his greatest warrant to lay claim to JEHOVAH as his God. So that you see, this first commandment in this situation, connected with the preface, is just big and pregnant with amazing grace and love. But this will yet farther appear in the prosecution of this subject, which I shall attempt to speak to in the following order and method, through divine assistance:—

I. To speak a little of this covenant-promise; *I am the Lord thy God.*

II. To speak a little of the precept; *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

III. To inquire a little into the connexion betwixt these two.

IV. Apply the whole.

I. The *first* thing is, to *speak a little of this covenant-promise, I am the Lord thy God.* And here, I shall, 1. Offer a few general remarks concerning this fundamental promise or grant of the covenant. 2. Inquire a little more particularly into the import of it; or what that is which God promises when he says so.

First, I would offer a few general remarks concerning this great covenant grant and promise, *I am the Lord thy God.* As,

1. I remark, that this, as all the other promises, is in *Christ;* my meaning is, that it goes upon a ransom found, and a satisfaction paid, to justice by Christ, our glorious Surety. Sirs, beware of imagining, that an absolute God, or a God out of Christ, utters this promise: no, no; an absolute God is a consuming fire to guilty sinners, and he could never speak in such a dialect to any of the sinful rebellious race of Adam, in consistency with the honour of his holiness, justice, and sovereignty, which were offended and affronted in the violation of his royal law. Unless the Son of God had promised, as our Surety, to pay the infinite ransom that justice demanded, none of Adam's posterity had ever heard any thing but the terri-

ble thunders of his wrath and justice pursuing them for sin. So that this covenant grant or promise, as well as the other declarations of the grace and love of God in the word to perishing sinners, must needs go upon the footing of the blood and satisfaction of Jesus: 2 Cor. v. 19: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." And therefore, sirs, whenever you read or hear a word of grace from God, think upon Christ, in and through whom only God is a God of peace; and let your soul say, "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!"

2. It is more than probable, that it was God in the person of his eternal Son, that uttered all these words at mount Sinai; and this promise in particular, by which the law was ushered in. Here was a parliament, or general assembly of angels, called at mount Sinai; and Christ the great Angel of the covenant was the president, or great Lord-speaker. This I gather from Psal. lxviii. ver. 17 and 18, compared Ver. 17, it is said, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is among them as in Sinai, in the holy place." Well, what Lord was it that was among them at Sinai? "Even that same Lord," ver. 18: "who ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men," &c. See, also, to the same purpose, Acts vii. 37, 38, compared. Ver. 37: "A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear." Christ is that great prophet. But then notice what follows, ver. 38: "This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, with the angel which spake to him" (namely, to Moses and the children of Israel) "in the mount Sinai, and with our fathers." So that it was Christ the Son of God that spake all these words in mount Sinai, saying, *I am the Lord thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me*, &c. And by the way, this furnishes us with a notable confutation of the Arians, who deny Christ to be a supreme, self-existent, and independent God. Who did ever doubt, that it was the supreme God, the self-existent God, that spake all these words, and delivered the law with such awful solemnity at mount Sinai! Yet, from what I was saying, it appears, that it was none other than Christ the eternal Son. But more of this in the application.

3. I remark, that this covenant grant and promise is the same upon the matter with the promise God had made to Abraham several hundred years before. Now, God's promise to Abraham was, "I will be thy God, and the God of thy seed:" and here he meets with his seed at Sinai, and repeats what he

had said to their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, saying, *I am the Lord thy God;* that is, I am the very same promising God that spake to Abraham, and what I said to him, I say it over again to you his posterity, and give the same ground for your faith that he had: as I was his God, so *I am the Lord thy God.* God does not come and go upon his promise, he is not *yea and nay:* he does not make a promise one day, and retract it another; no, it is always *yea and amen.* He does not speak of the promise made to Abraham as a thing out of date after so many years; no, It is as fresh and green with me as the first day I made it, *I am* still *the Lord thy God.* The promise is renewed in their own persons immediately by God, and they have as good a foundation laid by this means, as ever Abraham had, who believed without staggering.

4. These words, *I am the Lord thy God,* contain the leading promise of the covenant of grace; and there is more in them than heart can conceive, or tongue express; for here is an infinite God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, making over himself in two or three words to man upon earth. O what can he give more than himself! and what will he not give when he gives himself! Rom. viii. 32: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things?"

5. This promise is so framed by Infinite Wisdom as to point to every individual person in the camp of Israel. It is not *ye* collectively, but *thou* in the singular, as if he spake to every individual person in the camp, and every man was to look to it as pointing at him in particular; like a well drawn picture, it looked every man in the camp straight in the face. And not only did this promise point to every man and woman there present at mount Sinai, when the law was delivered, but it looked forward to all succeeding generations, and every man and woman that should spring of them; for this "promise was to them, and to their seed." So that no sooner did any of the posterity of Abraham come into the world, but God said to him, as much as to the men that were at the foot of Sinai, *I am the Lord thy God.* And no sooner did one of the Gentile nations join himself to the commonwealth of Israel, but immediately he found the God of Israel saying to him, *I am the Lord thy God;* and in this respect, this promise was a door of faith opened to the Gentiles, even before the coming of Christ. And when Christ came in the flesh, and by his death and resurrection, and publication of the everlasting gospel to the Gentile world, broke down the partition-wall betwixt them and the Jews, this promise, as well as the law subjoined thereunto, extended itself, not only to the Jews and their seed, but to the Gentiles, who were "afar off, and to as many as the

Lord our God shall call" by the sound of the gospel-trumpet. So that now, under the New Testament, this promise becomes a ground of faith to us, as well as to them; and we have the same interest in it that they had. But, to clear this, I shall add,

6. A sixth remark, namely, that this promise may be considered in a threefold situation; either as it is in the heart of God, or as it is in the word of God, or as in the hand of faith.

1*st*, As it is in the heart of God, or in his counsel or decree. And when viewed in this situation, it is peculiar only to his chosen people, whom he has "loved with an everlasting love" before the foundations of the world. But as it is in God's heart, it is not an object of faith to any of Adam's posterity; no, not the elect themselves, because they do not know that they are among the number of the elect till they be actually believers: no man can say, at the first instant, in a way of believing, *The Lord is my God*, upon the ground of electing love. So that the promise in this situation, being all one with the decree, must be laid aside as an object of faith at the first instance.

2*dly*, The promise may be viewed as situate in the word, as it is published and proclaimed to the visible church, "to whom belong the adoption, and the giving of the law, and the promises." View it in this situation, it is a ground of faith to every one that hears it. God said to every man in the camp of Israel, and he says to every man and woman in the visible church, *I am the Lord thy God*, and *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* And the man or woman that does not know and acknowledge God as his God in Christ, upon the ground of the promise, considered in this situation, (in the word,) as it is held forth in common to all as the object and ground of faith, at once rebels against the authority of God in the command, and gives the lie to his faithfulness engaged in the promise. And, therefore, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should come short of it; for unto us is this gospel preached, as well as unto them," Heb. iv. 1, 2.

3*dly*, This promise is also to be considered as in the hand of faith, or as it is applied and possessed in a way of believing. And, in this situation, it is only peculiar to a believer to have the Lord as his God; because it is only he that has a saving interest; it is he only whose "soul hath said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord," upon a covenant-ground.

Secondly, I come to inquire, what may be the import of this promise, or of this covenant-grant, that is here laid as a foundation of faith to Israel, and to the church in all succeeding generations.

Before I go on, I would put you in mind of what I said already, namely, that this covenant-grant or promise goes upon the ground of a ransom found, and satisfaction paid to justice; upon which account only God's anger is turned away, and he comforts us with such declarations of his grace as this in my text; *I am the Lord thy God.* In which words, I conceive he promises these three or four things, not to multiply particulars:—

1. The infinite God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, makes over himself by covenant as the soul's portion and inheritance for ever. And O what a vast, large, and glorious inheritance is this! O sirs, when God says, *I am the Lord thy God*, he says more than if he had said, Heaven is thine, earth is thine, the glories of both are thine! There is something in this promise, that "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive," &c. No wonder though David cried out upon the views of the Lord's being *the portion of* his *cup*, Psal. xvi. 6: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places, yea, I have a goodly heritage." O it is a surprising armsful the soul has, when by faith it grasps an infinite God in this little word, *I am the Lord thy God!*

2. When he says, *I am the Lord thy God*, he in effect says, All that I have I make it over to you. And when he makes a grant of himself, what else will he withhold! "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things?" Rom. viii. 32. Has he life? Yea, he is the fountain of life. Well, in this promise he gives life to thee, "Because I live, ye shall live also." Has he light in himself? Yea, "God is light, and with him is no darkness at all." Well, "he shall be thy everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Has he love? Yea, "God is love." Well, he who says he is *thy God*, "will shed abroad his love upon thy heart by the Holy Ghost, and circumcise thy heart to love him." Has he honour? Yea, "his work is honourable and glorious." Well, thou shalt be preferred; if thou take him as thy God, thou shalt have a "place among them that stand by" about his throne. Has he riches? Yea, "honour and riches are with me." Well, "he will fill all thy treasures" with gold better than the gold of Ophir. Has he "rivers of pleasures, and fulness of joy in his presence, and at his right hand?" Well, "the times of refreshing shall come forth from his presence" into thy soul.

3. When he says *I am the Lord thy God,* he engages that all the attributes and perfections of his glorious nature shall jointly conspire and be forthcoming for thy good. O sirs, immediately upon the breach of the first covenant, all the attributes of God put on an air of wrath and vengeance against man; hence Adam, after he had sinned, falls a trembling, and flees in among the thickets of Paradise to hide himself. But O! the divine attributes, as they shine in the face of our Immanuel, and are displayed through his blood and satisfaction, appear with an air of grace, love, and pity, inviting sinners to come and shelter themselves under them, from the wrath and curse due to them for sin. So that when God says, *I am the Lord thy God,* it is upon the matter as if he should say, O impotent and helpless sinner, come under my shadow, take me as thy own God, and my power shall be employed to help and protect thee. O foolish and bewildered sinner, my wisdom shall be thine, to direct and instruct thee. O polluted sinner, who hast "lain among the pots," my holiness shall sanctify thee, and "make thee like the wings of a dove," &c. O guilty sinner, my mercy shall pardon thee; yea, my justice shall acquit thee, on the score of the ransom that I have found: my goodness shall supply all thy need, and my truth and faithfulness are pledged to accomplish all the promises unto thee: my omniscient eye shall "run to and fro, through the whole earth, to show myself strong on thy behalf:" my providence shall be employed to manage all things for thy good and advantage: "I will ride in the heavens for thy help, and in mine excellency on the skies."

4. *I am the Lord thy God;* that is, Whatever I, the infinite and eternal God, can do for thy advantage, it shall not be wanting. And O what cannot the arm of omnipotency do? "he doth great things, yea, wonders without number." What wonders has God wrought for his children and people, in all ages of the world? It was he that saved Noah by water from perishing in the flood. It was he that made a lane for Israel through the deeps, as if it had been dry land. It was he that dissolved the flinty rock into floods of water, suspended the fury of the devouring flames, and stopped the course of the sun. "His hand is not shortened, that it cannot save." Now, whatever that omnipotent arm, that "stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, can do for thy salvation, it shall not be wanting. All this, and infinitely more than I can name, is wrapped up in the bosom of this covenant-grant, which is here laid as the foundation and ground of our faith; *I am the Lord thy God.* And thus much concerning the promise.

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to *speak a little of the precept subjoined or annexed to this covenant-promise, Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* And, in speaking to the precept, I shall observe the same method as in discoursing upon the promise; 1. By premising some remarks. 2. Inquire into its import.

First, I would offer some remarks upon it. As,

1. I remark, that as the promise, *I am the Lord thy God,* is given forth by a God in Christ; so the precept in this situation must needs come from the same fountain. This law or commandment must be viewed as in the hand of a Mediator, and not of an absolute God. The reason is plain, because the command obliges us to have him as our God, to love and trust him as our own God, which a sinner cannot do, but only as he is in Christ. Here the command stands under a covenant of grace; as is evident from the preface. Indeed, if that glorious preface, or covenant-grant, *I am the Lord thy God,* had not gone before the command, we might have taken it as coming from an absolute God; but, taking the precept in connexion with the preface, we must needs take up the law here as in the hand of a reconciled God in Christ, and as coming from that glorious fountain. And therefore let us say, with the church, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, and he will save us."

2. This commandment of the law, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me,* narrows and extends its obligation upon the children of men, in a suitableness to the revelation that he makes of himself. When God reveals himself only by the works of creation and providence, as he does to the heathen world, then this commandment obliges us to know and acknowledge him as a God Creator and Preserver; but when he superadds to this the revelation of himself as a reconciled God, a redeeming God in Christ, then the law superadds a new obligation, namely, to know and acknowledge him as such, and to claim him as the God of salvation; a saving, pitying, pardoning God.

3. As the promise, *I am the Lord thy God,* is the leading and fundamental blessing promised in the covenant of grace, which draws all other blessings along with it; so this precept, Thou shalt have the Lord JEHOVAH as thy God, is the leading and fundamental duty of the law, which sweetly and powerfully constrains the soul to obey all the other commands of it. The reason of this is plain: when a person is determined to know and acknowledge God as his own God in Christ, it binds and obliges him inevitably not to bow down to images, or to give that worship and glory to any other, which is due to him alone; he will be concerned to sanctify the name of

God, and his holy Sabbath, and in a word, to have a respect unto all his commandments. Hence it is that faith in Christ Jesus (which is just the first commandment in other words) is so much inculcated in the scriptures, particularly of the New Testament; yea, we are expressly told, that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and "he that cometh unto God, must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."

4. That the command and promise are of equal extent; so that every man is bound to obey the command, or to have a God in Christ as his own God, is concerned in this promise, *I am the Lord thy God;* or, in other words, he is as much obliged to believe this promise with application, as he is obliged to obey the command. The reason of this is plain, because a believing the promise with application, is the very thing that the first commandment requires of us; and the promise is the very ground and foundation of that faith that is required in the command; and the foundation of faith must be as extensive as the command of believing, unless we would say, that God commands men to believe, without giving them a foundation to believe upon; so that, if I be obliged to have the Lord as my God, then it is lawful, yea, plain duty for me, viewing the covenant-grant, to say to the Lord, "Thou art my Lord."

5. As the promise is indefinite, *I am the Lord thy God,* without mentioning any, or including any, but pointing to every man in particular; so the precept is indefinite, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me,* without mentioning any particular person to whom it extends. And I think it is observable, that both the promise and precept are in the singular number, as if God spoke to every individual. And I do think that Infinite Wisdom has so ordered it of design, that no man might neglect the promise, that thinks himself bound to obey the precept. The legal heart of man is ready to fall in with this command of the law, and own its obligation; while, in the mean time, it rejects the promise, as a thing in which it has no concern. What more ordinary, than to hear some, especially under awakenings of conscience by the law, say, O it is a sad truth, indeed, that I am a debtor to the law, and obliged to obey it! but as for the promise of God, *I am the Lord thy God,* I have no interest or concern in it. But, sirs, whatever you may imagine, I tell you, that by this way you are separating what God has joined; he has joined the command and the promise together, therefore let not your unbelieving hearts or legal spirits put them asunder: for you can never obey the first command without closing with this promise, *I am the Lord thy God.* But more of this afterward.

Secondly, I come to inquire what is included or required of us in this command of the moral law, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* I do not design to launch out in opening of this precept in its greatest latitude, or in telling you of all the duties required, and sins forbidden, in it; that which I have especially in my view, is the obligation that it lays upon us to receive and believe the promise, *I am the Lord thy God.* And, for clearing of this, there are only these few things I name, as included in this commandment:—

1. This commandment obliges us to believe that God is, which is the first and fundamental truth both of natural and revealed religion; and except you be established in the faith of this, you believe nothing to purpose. We cannot open our eyes, or look upon any of the creatures of God, whether in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, but this truth must shine into our minds with such a glaring evidence, that one would think there were no need of a command to oblige us to believe it.

2. This command obliges us to believe, that he is such a God as he has revealed himself to be in his word and in his works. It binds us to believe all the displays that he has given of his eternal power and Godhead, in his works of creation and providence; but especially us, who enjoy the revelation of his word, to believe every thing that he has revealed of himself there; as, that he is a Spirit, infinite, eternal, unchangeable, &c.; that he is but one God in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; that from eternity he decreed all things that come to pass in time; that he is the great Creator that made all things of nothing, by the word of his power, in the space of six days, and all very good; that by his providence he preserves and governs all his creatures, and all their actions; and that this great God in the "fulness of time, was manifested in the flesh," in the person of his eternal Son, and became a Redeemer and Saviour of lost sinners; that he was "made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons;" and in a word, every other thing that God has revealed of himself.

3. This commandment requires us to believe and be persuaded, that this glorious God is the chief good of the rational soul; that as his glory is to be our ultimate end, so our chief happiness lies in the enjoyment of him alone: *Thou shalt have no other gods before me;* that is, Thou shalt place thy chief happiness in the enjoyment of me, who *am the Lord thy God.* So that, when God commands us to have him as our God, he commands us to be happy for ever in himself, and to say

with Asaph, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in the earth that I desire beside thee."

4. This command requires us to assent to every word God speaks, as a truth of infallible verity, and to the truth of this promise in particular; that he speaks the truth in his heart, when he says, *I am the Lord thy God.* And therefore, not to believe that it is as God says in this promise, is to call God a liar; it is an impeaching of his veracity in the promise, and a contempt of his authority interposed in the command. From whence it appears that an unbeliever breaks the very first command of the law of nature.

5. This command requires us, not only to believe the truth of the promise in general, but to believe it with particular application of it, each one of us unto ourselves. It is not a fulfilling of the contents of this command, to believe that he was the God of Israel, or the God of the visible church, or the God of the elect, or of all that believe in him, for all this do the devils and reprobates believe; but we must believe, know, and acknowledge that he is our God; and every one for himself must say, in faith, with Israel, "He is my God, I will prepare him a habitation." The first command requires of us a faith exactly corresponding to the promise: now, the promise is to every one in particular, *I am the Lord thy God;* and the command runs parallel with it, pointing out every man in particular, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me:* and therefore it is a particular applying faith that is here required and called for. Perhaps this may appear somewhat surprising to those who never considered it, that by the first commandment, they are obliged to believe that the Lord is their God by covenant grant and promise. They believe that he is their Creator, and Preserver, and Benefactor; but they never thought he was their God by covenant-grant, or that they were bound to believe it with application, till once they found themselves so and so qualified. To take down this fortress of unbelief, I would only have you consider,

1*st*, If ever there was a time since you had a being, and had the law of God intimated to you, in which you was free from the obligation of the first command of the moral law, as it here stands connected with the covenant or the promise? No, surely. And if so, there was never a time in which you was not obliged to believe, know, and acknowledge the Lord as your God, upon the ground of the covenant-grant: and all the time you have neglected to do so, you have been living in disobedience to the first command; and while the first command is not obeyed, which is the foundation of all the rest, not one of them can be obeyed. And I only leave it to yourselves to be considered, whether you may

lawfully live in disobedience to the first command of the law of the great God, or suspend your obedience to it, till you find qualifications in yourselves, upon which you think you may lay claim to him in a way of sense. This is not to ground your faith upon the veracity of God in his promise, but to seek a ground for your faith within you.

2*dly*, However surprising this way of teaching may appear from the first commandment, yet it is nothing else than what you are taught in your lesser, received, and approved Catechisms. The first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge the Lord as God, and *our God:* and to worship and glorify him accordingly.

3*dly*, I find God requiring faith of sinners, and of notorious backsliders, in the same terms as is here called for, Jer. iii. 4, compared with ver. 1. If we notice the 1st verse, and the 2nd following, we shall find that God is there dealing with a company of people who had made defection into idolatry; and he charges them with a perfidious and treacherous dealing with him, under the notion of an adulteress that had forsaken the guide of her youth, and prostituted herself to other lovers. However, infinite love opens up its bowels of pity, sends out a sound of grace and love to them, saying, in the close of ver. 1, "Though thou hast played the harlot with many lovers; yet return again to me, saith the Lord." Well, what is the return sovereign grace expects from them after such a discovery of his readiness to receive them? See it, ver. 4: "Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My father, thou art the guide of my youth?" that is, Wilt thou not from this time obey the first commandment of my law, and know and acknowledge me, and me only, as thy God and Father in Christ?

4*thly*, I find that whenever a sinful people begin to act faith, their faith, even the first receptive by faith, is expressed in words which bear a plain obedience to what is required in the first commandment; as in the case of these, Jer. iii. Whenever the call of the word is carried home by the efficacy of the Spirit upon their hearts, they cry out, ver. 22, "Behold we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God;" by which they acknowledge him as their God, even their *own* God. So Zech. xiii. 9. And I find that the saints of God in scripture, when in the exercise of faith, still yielding obedience to this first command of the law, and coming in with their appropriating *my*, Psal. xvi. 2: "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord." With what pleasure does David obey his command, Psal. xviii. 1, 2, where eight or nine times he repeats his claim, acknowledging God as God, and his own God? And unbelieving Thomas, so

soon as he gets his foot upon the neck of his unbelief, obeys this command, making a solemn acknowledgment of Christ, "My Lord, and my God."

To all this I shall only add, to prevent mistakes, that when the first commandment requires us to know and acknowledge God as our God, it is not to be understood, as if this were done by a saying it with the mouth only; no, no, "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." We read of some that "remembered God as their rock, and the high God as their Redeemer; *but* they flattered him with their mouth, and they lied to him with their tongues, for their heart was not right with him:" they did not acknowledge him as their God, with their hearts, acquiescing in him as their chief good and only portion; and therefore God rejects all their profession of kindness. Let us then embrace and acknowledge him as our God, with our hearts, lips, and lives, worshipping, glorifying, and serving him, as our God, all the days of our appointed time.

III. The *third* thing proposed was, to *speak a little of the connexion betwixt the promise and the precept.* That there is a connexion between them is plain; for the promise is repeated in the command, and the meaning is, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me,* who engage myself by covenant to be *the Lord thy God.* How sweetly is the law and gospel connected here! how sweetly does the law stand in a subserviency to the glorious designs of grace!

I would have you carefully observe as to this order and connexion, that it is suited to the circumstances of the lost sinner, or of fallen man, who has nothing, and can do nothing, but is, "wretched, miserable, poor, and blind, and naked." Because man can now do nothing for his life, therefore God will give him life and glory for nothing at all: and as a testimony of his having got all freely from God, he will have him to obey. It is an order and method suited to God's great design, of abasing man, staining his pride, and of exalting the glorious freedom and riches of his grace: "Where is boasting?" says the apostle. "It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." The law of faith is just the free promise, *I am the Lord thy God; I will be to them a Father,* &c. Now, by this law, and not by the way of works, self is abased, and the glory of free grace exalted.

I shall only add, as to this connexion and order, that God, like a wise builder, first lays the foundation of faith in the promise, saying, *I am the Lord thy God;* and then enjoins the duty of believing: he first reveals the object of faith; and then lays on the duty of faith: he first makes a grant of

grace; and then warrants us by his command to lay hold on it. The promise is a plaster or medicine; and the command orders the application or making use of it. The promise is the door of salvation opened; and the command enjoins us to enter in by that door. The promise is the testament: and the command is the Judge's order and warrant to make use of the goods, without fear of vicious intromission. The promise gives us a right of access; the command, when obeyed and complied with, gives a right of possession. By the grant of the covenant, God manifests his free and sovereign grace; and by the command he manifests his royal authority, which he makes subservient to his glorious design of grace. And so much shall serve for clearing the order and connexion between the promise, *I am the Lord thy God:* and the precept, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

IV. The *fourth* general head was the *Application.* And the *first* use shall be comprised in these inferences:—

1. From what is said we may see, that Christ, our glorious Redeemer, is none other than the supreme, self-existent, and independent God. Who ever doubted, as was hinted before, that it was the supreme God, the great lawgiver of heaven and earth, who spoke all these words, saying, *I am the Lord thy God: Thou shalt have no other gods before me?* &c. Whosoever reads or hears these words with opened eyes, or understanding hearts, cannot shun to cry out, "It is the voice of God, and not of man;" yea, the voice of the supreme, self-existent God, and not of any inferior or dependent being; the voice of him whose prerogative alone it is to be Lord of the conscience, and to "search the heart and the reins;" for these words are "quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." As all the works, so all the words of God carry the stamp and evidence of their glorious Author in their bosom. And are we not immediately struck with the impressions of the supreme, self-existent Being, when these words are uttered, *I am the Lord thy God?* &c. Had Moses, or the children of Israel, when they stood quaking and trembling at the foot of the mount, any notions of a dependent deity speaking to them? No, they knew and believed that it was he "whose name alone is JEHOVAH, most high over all the earth." Yet it was cleared already, this was Christ the eternal Son of God; and therefore he must needs be the supreme God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory with his Father. It is the most daring presumption, the most consummate ingratitude, for any of Adam's race, especially

for any professed Christian, bearing his blessed name, and wearing his livery, to lessen his glory, and derogate from his excellency; as if, when he is called the supreme God, it were to be understood *cum grano salis*, with grains of allowance or abatement. I am persuaded there was not an Arian at the foot of Sinai among all the many thousands of Israel: and were these words to be repeated by the Son of God with the same awful solemnity among us, I am very sure there would not be one Arian among us either. What pity is it, that the resentment of our Redeemer's quarrel, against a notorious blasphemer of his supreme Deity, has not run deeper than it has done of late in the supreme judicatory of this national church, whose peculiar province it has been in former times to contend for the royalties of his crown against those who attempted to invade them?

2. From what has been said, we may see the mistake of those who assert, that faith in Christ is a new precept of the gospel, not required in the moral law, but by a new positive law given forth under the gospel. None, I suppose, will deny, that the law required faith in a God Creator from our first parents in innocency; and if so, what need of any new law to bind and oblige us to believe in the same God revealing himself in the capacity of a Redeemer? We have already observed from the text, how sweetly the old law of nature is grafted in, in a subserviency to the grace of the new covenant, obliging us to know and acknowledge a God in Christ as our own God, upon the footing of this glorious grant of grace, *I am the Lord thy God.* The applying or appropriating act of faith, when it is expressed in words, comes forth carrying the stamp of obedience to what the first commandment of the moral law requires. What need, then, of any new positive law to enjoin it? The same law that bound Adam, before the fall, to believe the promise of life upon the footing of perfect obedience, bound him to believe the promise of life, after the fall, upon the footing of the incarnation and satisfaction of the Son of God: and therefore, when the first promise of the seed of the woman is uttered, Gen. iii. 15, we read of no new law enjoining him to believe it; the very light and law of nature told our first parents, that a promise, especially the promise of God, was to be believed.

3. See hence the necessity, excellency, and warrantableness of the great duty of believing, which we ministers are so much pressing upon you who are hearers. It must needs be the most necessary and excellent duty which God enjoins in the first precept of his law, and which he has laid as the very spring and foundation of obedience to all the other precepts; namely, to receive him, and to acknowledge him

as our own God in Christ, and him alone; and to rest in him, and upon him, as our up-making and everlasting all. Hence, (John vi. 28, 29,) when the Jews were fond to know what they should do to work the work of God, he directs them to faith in himself; because this was the first thing that the law required as it stood under a covenant of grace: "This is the work of God," (his work in a way of eminence; the very first and fundamental work, and the spring and soul of all obedience,) "that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." For this reason, true obedience to the law is called "the obedience of faith:" and we are told, Heb. xi. 6, that "without faith it is impossible to please God;" and, "Whatsoever is not of faith, is sin," Rom. xiv. 23; because, until this first command of the law be obeyed, till we receive, embrace, and acknowledge the Lord as our God in Christ, we do nothing at all in obedience to God's law, but break it every moment of our life. Again, as I said, we see here also the warrantableness of believing in Christ, and of embracing the promise. It is as warrantable for a lost sinner to embrace the promise, and to receive Christ by virtue of the promise, as to do any other thing that the law requires. Will any man doubt his warrant to honour and reverence the name of God, to honour his father and mother, to sanctify the Sabbath? &c. As little reason has he to doubt his warrant by faith to lay claim to this glorious grant of sovereign grace through Christ, *I am the Lord thy God;* seeing this is the very thing that is required in this command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* And as this command is a noble warrant for believing, so it is a warrant of universal extent: none who own the obligation of the moral law, can shift the obligation of its very first command. This view of matters, if taken up in the light of the Spirit, serves to overthrow one of the principal strongholds of unbelief; and at the same time discovers a ground of believing with boldness, without any manner of presumption. The unbelieving deceitful heart turns us away from the living God, by telling us, that we are not warranted to believe in Christ, and that it is arrogance and presumption for us to intermeddle with the promise. But, so far is this surmise from being truth, that unless you believe in Christ, or, which is all one, except you acknowledge a God in Christ as your God, you make God a liar, who says, *I am the Lord thy God;* and rebel against his authority interposed in his first commandment, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

4. See hence a solid ground for the assurance of faith. Why, it has the noblest ground in the world to go upon, namely, the infallible word of a God of truth, saying, *I am the Lord thy God;* and the best warrant in the world, namely,

the first commandment of the law, requiring us to know and acknowledge him as *our God.* The first command requires a persuasion of the promise, with the application or appropriation of it to the soul in particular: and what is that but the assurance of faith? And no doubt the law requires every duty, and particularly this in its perfection; the consideration of which may make every one of us, yea, even the best believer upon earth, to cry out with the poor man in the gospel, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief;" and, with the disciples, "Lord, increase our faith."

5. See hence the proper bottom of true Christian morality, and an excellent text by which to distinguish betwixt gospel and legal preaching. You see here, upon what foundation God himself inculcates the duties of the moral law; he first discovers himself as a reconciled God, a promising God in Christ, saying, *I am the Lord thy God;* and, upon this ground, urges the duties of the law. Now, the order of doctrine observed by God himself, ought certainly to be observed by us in our inculcating any duty of the law upon our hearers; and if this method be not observed it is certainly legal. Neither do I think that it is enough, when we are pressing any duty of the law, to come in with a direction or advice at the end, telling that all is to be done in the strength of Christ; we see here that God begins his sermon of morality to Israel, from mount Sinai, with a revelation of himself as the Lord God gracious and merciful through Christ, *I am the Lord thy God;* and lays this as the foundation of obedience to the following precepts. And I do think, that we who are ministers, when we inculcate the duties of the law upon people, ought always to keep the grace of the new covenant in our eye; for unless obedience to the law be influenced with this view, it cannot be the obedience of faith, and, consequently, cannot be acceptable: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." It is observable, that God, in the promulgation of the law to Israel, frequently intermixes the grace of the new covenant with the precepts of the law, and every now and then casts it up in their view, that he was the Lord their God in Christ. So, in the second command, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, &c.: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, &c., showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments." So in the third commandment, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," &c. So in the fourth, "The seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord thy God," &c. So likewise in the fifth, "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." Thus, I say, he makes gospel-grace, like

a thread of gold, to run through the duties of the law, by which the whole law is sweetened and beautified, his yoke made easy, and his burden light.

Upon the other hand, there is an error, I fear, too common among some. Whenever they hear a minister pressing duty, immediately they conclude him to be a legal preacher, without ever considering upon what ground he does it; for if he press the duties of the law upon the ground of covenanted grace, he acts according to his commission, and keeps the order and method that God has laid; but if this method be not followed, if the duties of the law be urged as the foundation of our claim to the privileges of the gospel, or without keeping Christ and the grace of the gospel in the eye of the sinner, as the foundation of duty, you may, indeed, conclude, that it is legal. Although what the man says may be truth, abstractly considered, yet the truth is not delivered in its due order and connexion; and therefore has a tendency to mislead the hearer, at least to lead him into perplexing exercises.

6. See hence the truth of what the apostle asserts concerning God, 1 John iv. 16: "God is love." Why, the promise here is a promise of love. What more can infinite love say than what is here said, *I am the Lord thy God?* What can he give more than himself? And as the promise is a promise of love, so the precept is a precept of love. *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* He first makes a free grant and gift of himself to us in his covenant, and then concludes us under a law of love, by which he makes it the first and fundamental duty of obedience to him, that we shall know and acknowledge him as *our own God;* or, in other words, that we should be happy for ever in the enjoyment of him. The most consummate happiness of the rational creature lies in what God here commands, namely, in having him, and none other, as *our God.* Oh how excellent is his loving kindness! surely "God is love," it is the regnant perfection of his nature. And O how reasonable is it that we should love the Lord OUR GOD with all the heart, soul, strength, and mind! And O how unreasonable is the enmity of the heart against God! Do we thus requite a God of love? Well may the Lord say to us, as he did to Israel, "O my people! what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me."

7. See hence what it is that makes the yoke of obedience easy, and the burden of it light to a believer. Whence is it that the believer delights in the law after the inward man? why doth he rejoice to work righteousness? Why, he remembers God in his ways; he remembers that the Lawgiver

is none other than "the Lord his God and Redeemer;" and therefore he keeps all his commandments with pleasure; therefore he "runs and doth not weary; walks, and doth not faint." He views God, not as an enemy, not as an avenging Judge, but as his own God in Christ; he views him in Immanuel, as a God *with* him, not a God against him; and this is like oil to his chariot wheels, which makes him run without wearying. On the other hand, we may see here, what it is that makes the duties of the law an insupportable yoke and burden to hypocrites and Christless professors, who tire in the duties of obedience before they be well set out. Why, they do not begin their obedience where God begins his law, or they do not set their obedience upon the same foundation of gospel grace that God has set his law upon. They do not begin with acting faith on the covenant, or with receiving a God in Christ as their God by virtue of the covenant grant and promise: and if folk do not begin here where God begins, their blossoms cannot miss to wither and come to naught.

8. See hence the errors of those who imagine, that it was a covenant of works which God entered into with Israel at mount Sinai. Indeed, if the promise had followed after the commandments of the law; and if God had said, Keep these commandments, and, upon your so doing, I will be the Lord your God; in this case it had been a pure covenant of works: whether perfect or sincere obedience had been the condition, it is all one; still the reward would have been in a way of pactional debt, as in the first covenant. But, as you heard, the order of the covenant of works, or the connexion betwixt the precept and promise, as it was laid in that covenant, is now inverted: for now God first promises, in a way of sovereign grace, to be the Lord *our God* and *Redeemer*, which is the substance and sum of the new covenant; and having made such a grant of grace, to be received by faith, without, or before any works of obedience can be performed by us, he immediately subjoins the law of nature in ten words, showing us "what is good, and what the Lord our God requires of us," not as a condition of his own gracious grant, but as a testimony of our love and gratitude to him, who promises of his free and sovereign grace, to be the Lord our God. So that, I say, it was God's covenant of grace that was promulgated at mount Sinai, and the law was added to it because of transgression, and grafted upon it as a rule of obedience. And whatever covenants or engagements to duty we read of, whether national or personal, still they went upon the foundation of grace laid in God's covenant of grace; and in so far as Israel, or any else, go off from this foundation in their engagements to duty, in so far they pervert the

design of the promise and law annexed to it, and turn back to a covenant of works. So much for *Information.*

A *second* use shall be of *Trial.* And that which I would have you to try is, Whether you have this day obeyed the first commandment of the moral law? Did you ever take or receive JEHOVAH, a God in Christ, as your own God, by virtue of the covenant-promise, *I am the Lord your God?* Why, may some be ready to say, that is a strange question; ever since we had the exercise of reason, or could repeat the first commandment, we have been endeavouring to know and acknowledge God to be the only true God, and our God, and to worship and glorify him accordingly. I confess that it is an easy matter to say this with the mouth; but the question is, If the heart has said it in a way of believing, setting to the seal the veracity of the Promiser? "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation," Rom. x. 10: first the heart believes it, because God has said it; and then the tongue follows the heart. Canst thou turn inward, and entertain thyself with David's soliloquy, Psal. xvi. 2: "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord?"

In order to a discovery of the hypocrite or presumptuous believer, here I would have it carefully observed, that the first commandment, which is the correlate of the promise, has both a positive and a negative part. The positive part is, *To know and acknowledge the Lord as the only true God, and our God;* the negative part is, *To have no other gods before him.* Now, the hypocrite, or presumptuous person, although he outwardly professes to obey the positive part, or to acknowledge JEHOVAH as his God in Christ; yet as he never does this really with his heart, so he shifts the negative part of the precept, for secretly he worships and acknowledges some other god: there is still some idol of jealousy lies hid among the rotten stuff of his depraved heart, which gets God's room and God's throne in his soul; much like the people transplanted by the king of Assyria into Samaria, concerning whom it is said, 2 Kings xvii. 33, "They feared the Lord, and served their own gods." And therefore, I say, still the question remains to be answered, Do you really, and from the heart, obey the first commandment? Have you any other gods before him, who says, *I am the Lord thy God?* Is there any idol or lust that gets the Lord's place in thy heart?

I shall, for your trial, take notice of some idols or false gods, which are worshipped and served by many, while they profess to have no other God but JEHOVAH alone. Only, before I proceed, I would have it considered, that there is a

twofold idolatry; one gross and corporeal, when, by the external actions of the body, such as bowing, prostration, or the like, men do homage to stocks or stones, dead and dumb idols: I hope I have none such to do with at present. But there is a more refined and spiritual idolatry, which, I fear, is more common in the visible church than many are aware of; and that is, when the acts of the heart and mind, such as trust, love, hope, fear, joy, delight, desire, in which the essence of soul-worship consists, are alienations from God, and placed upon any thing besides him. In such a case, one neither believes the promise, nor obeys the precept now before us. Why, because whatever he pretends, yet still he has some other god before him who is the only living and true God.

This premised, I would have you consider, that there are two grand idols worshipped and served by the generality of the world, yea, of the visible church, namely, self and the world.

1. I say, self is the great Diana, which all the world worships, excepting a very few whom God has called out of the world. Every man, while in a natural state, makes a god of himself. Hence it is that the principal batteries of the gospel are mounted against this idol. The very first lesson in the school of Christianity, which is materially the same with the first precept of the moral law, is "Let a man deny himself;" let him renounce self as his god, that he may have no other gods before me, who am "God manifested in the flesh."

This idol of self is pregnant with a numerous brood of lesser or subordinate idols. Some make a god of their own understandings; "for vain man would be wise though he be born as the wild ass's colt." What cursed pride is it in some, even in our own bowels, that they will needs exalt their own depraved reason above the wisdom of God, making it the standard of revelation, as if nothing were to be received or believed, but what corrupted reason, which is nonplussed by the least work of nature, is able to comprehend? Is not this giving that glory to our own understanding, which is due to an infinitely wise God? If ever we be believers indeed, reason must quit the throne, and lie down at the foot of faith, owning that reason is but folly before the wisdom of God revealed in his word. Others idolize their own understandings, when inwardly they disapprove of God's providential dispensations, as if they could manage things more to advantage, if the reins of administration were in their hands.

Some make a god of their wills. When a person follows the swing of his own corrupted and rebellious will, in opposition to the commanding will of God in his word; what else

is that but to exalt self-will above the will of God? It is the will of God, that men should read and hear his word, attend his courts, wait upon his ordinances, sanctify his name, keep his sabbath, that they should forego such a lust, that they should pluck out a right eye, and cut off a right-hand sin, in obedience to him who is the Lord our God. "No," says the rebellious depraved will, "I have loved strangers, and after them I will go. Who is the Almighty, that I should serve him? and what profit should I have if I pray unto him? Let him depart; for I desire not the knowledge of his ways; I know not the Lord, neither will I let my lusts go."

Will any man practically treat God after this manner, and yet pretend that he obeys this command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me?* No, his own will is his god: and therefore he never yet closed by a true faith with this covenant-grant, *I am the Lord thy God.*

Some again make a god of their righteousness, putting it in the room of him who is "JEHOVAH our righteousness;" like the Jews, Rom. x. 3, who "being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, would not submit themselves unto the righteousness of God." This is the idol which, of all others, it is the hardest to pull out of the sinner's embraces. And the reason is, because self-righteousness is a thing which seems to have the countenance of the law of God; and while a man has the law on his side, he thinks himself in safety, and that he has the approbation of the Lawgiver: "God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men," said the self-righteous Pharisee. It is harder to convince this man of his dangerous state, than to convince a hundred profane wretches of their danger: hence Christ says to the self-righteous Pharisees, "Publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God before you." I shall only say to you who are hugging this idol of your own law-righteousness in your bosoms, you shall as surely perish in your righteousness, as ever any of Adam's race perished in their sins. Why, because God has said, that "by the works of the law no flesh living shall be justified;" and "As many as are of the works of the law, are under the curse." You are pretending to keep the law, and seeking righteousness by the law; and yet are living in the neglect and contempt of the first and greatest command in the whole law, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* You never yet discarded the idol of self, and therefore never learned that first lesson of religion, "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself," &c.

2. Another grand idol, to which the greatest multitude do bow, is the world. Solomon tells us of some who have "the world set in their heart." Ever since the fall of Adam, the

world, and the vanities thereof, have usurped that room in the heart of man which is due to God only; and nothing less than infinite power can unhinge the world from that seat which it has got in our hearts. Hence it is, that until a "day of power" come, we are ever making a God of one thing or another in this visible perishing world.

Some make a god of their worldly riches and substance. This is done when the desire, delight, and esteem of the soul terminates more upon these than upon God who is the chief good. O "who will show us any good?" is the cry of many. But few say with David, "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us. One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord," &c. The covetous worldling sees more beauty in gathering dust, than he sees in him who is the brightness of the Father's glory, and is more concerned to get and keep the mammon of this world, than how to be interested in the unsearchable riches of Christ, or to lay up for himself treasures in heaven, which moth and rust do not corrupt. And will such a man pretend, that he keeps the first commandment, or hath no other gods before the Lord?

Some make a god of their worldly relations. The husband may idolize his wife, the wife her husband, parents their children, and children their parents, by giving more of their affection to them than to God himself. Upon this account Christ tells us, "If we love father or mother, brother or sister, more than him, we are not worthy of him." When we delight more in the society of our friends and relations, than in fellowship with God; or are more impatient of their absence, than we are under God's hidings and withdrawings from our souls; in that case we put them in God's room, and so break his command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me;* and also sin against the love and grace of his covenant, where he says, *I am the Lord thy God.* Of this kind of idolatry they are guilty, who value themselves more upon their relation to, or descent from, such and such families or ancestors, than upon their relation to God, or those who are dignified with his image, or are of his household and family by regeneration and adoption.

Some make a god of their worldly pleasures: 2 Tim. iii. 4, the apostle tells us of some who "are lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God." The drunkard has more pleasure in his cups, the swearer in his oaths, the unclean person in his swinish lusts, the unjust person in his unlawful gains, than in God. Many will rather risk the displeasure of God, and "rush upon the thick bosses of his buckler, *than* make a covenant

with their eyes" or other senses, that they may not be porches for the fiery darts of Satan to enter in and inflame the fuel of inward lust and corruption. The apostle speaks of some "whose god is their belly," Phil. iii. 19; they are more concerned what they shall eat and drink, or wherewith they shall be clothed, than how they shall glorify God, or advance their own or others' spiritual and eternal well-being. They have more pleasure in an ordinary meal among friends, than in eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, among his friends and members at his table. And is this to have no other gods before JEHOVAH *our God?*

Some, again, make a god of their worldly credit and reputation: John v. 44, the Pharisees loved the praise of men, more than that honour which comes from God: and this was the reason of their rejecting Christ. Will not our spirits rise with resentment when our own character or reputation is attacked; and yet bear it with patience when God is dishonoured, or his holy name profaned? which plainly says, that our own honour is dearer to us than the honour of God; which could never be, if we had no other god before him.

Some make a god of their worldly helps and confidence in the time of danger, and trust more to these for deliverance than unto himself: Is. xxxi. 1: "Wo to them that go down to Egypt for help, and stay on horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many; and in horsemen, because they are very strong: but they look not unto the holy One of Israel, neither seek the Lord." There is a solemn curse pronounced against idolaters of this kind: "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord." Some, again, make a god of their very enemies, and are more afraid of him that can only kill the body, than they are of him who is able to cast both soul and body into hell. Some make a god of the devil, who is indeed called "the god of this world." When any lust or idol is set up and served, either with body or mind, the devil himself in that case is worshipped and served, though not intentionally; hence Jeroboam's calves are called *devils*, although by these he only intended to worship the true God. The devil is then worshipped, when we are more afraid of him than we are to displease God by sin; and when people run to wizards, or such as are supposed to be in compact with the devil, in order to ask advice, or to know future events, or to discover what is stolen or lost; this, I say, is devil-worship, and was the immediate forerunner of Saul's ruin, when he went to the witch of Endor to seek counsel. It is joined with the abominable idolatry of Molech, Lev. xx. 6.

To conclude, how many are there that make gods of their

vile lusts, and serve and obey these rather than God? Some serve the lust of uncleanness, some that of intemperance, some the lust of revenge, others of covetousness or ambition, or the like. O how innumerable are the lusts of the unmortified heart? yet, according to the number of thy lusts, O sinner, so are thy gods. "Know ye not," says the apostle, "that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?" Rom. vi. 16.

Thus I have given you a short account of some other gods which people may have secretly lodged in their hearts, while they pretended to obey this command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* Take heed that the word of the Lord be not against you; and that, while I have been trying to open this law or commandment of God in its spirituality, conscience be not saying, as Ahab to the prophet, "Thou hast found me, O mine enemy." Has not this commandment, which is exceeding broad, discovered some other god in thy heart than him who says here, *I am the Lord thy God?* If any one of these idols be reigning upon the throne of thy heart, thou never to this day obeyedst the first commandment of the law of God. From whence it is easy to infer, that thy obedience is yet to begin with respect to the whole law, and every other commandment of it; for if the first be not first obeyed, none of the rest can be obeyed; no, it is impossible; because, as I said already, the foundation of all obedience is laid in having no other god but him only, who promises in the preface to be the Lord our God. O sirs, for the Lord's sake, look to it in time, that there be not a lie in your right hand, while you profess to close with this promise, *I am the Lord thy God;* for if you close with it aright by faith, you will just do as required in this command, saying, I will have no other gods before God in Christ reconciling the world to himself. Thus, by obeying the first command, we receive Christ, and rest upon him *alone* for salvation, as he is offered, given, or promised in the gospel, or covenant of grace.

Use *third* of this doctrine may be by way of *Consolation* to believers, whose souls, in obedience to this commandment, have, upon the foundation of this covenant-grant, said unto the Lord, *Thou art my Lord;* and who in the faith of this promise, *I am the Lord thy God,* have gone to the communion-table, and taken the bread and wine in that ordinance as the seal of this promise, and all the other promises that depend on it. That you may see what strong consolation is here, I pray you consider, that this promise, *I am the Lord thy God,* draws all the blessings of heaven and eternity with it. There is not one promise from the beginning of Genesis to the end

of the Revelation, which thou mayest not confidently claim as thine own, if thou hast obeyed the command of God, in laying hold of God as thy God, thy only God, by virtue of this glorious grant of sovereign grace, *I am the Lord thy God.*

It is impossible that I can tell you the ten thousandth part of that grace and glory that lies in the womb of this promise, *I am the Lord thy God;* an infinite God, who is an infinite good, is in it: "Who can by searching find out God? who can find out the Almighty unto perfection?" New scenes of his infinite glory will be opening to saints and angels through eternity in heaven. O then, how immense is the treasure that is here secured to thee, Oh believer, in these two or three words, *I am the Lord thy God!* Well mayst thou sing, "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places." He that gave himself unto death for thy redemption in the person of the Son, and gives himself as JEHOVAH, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, by covenant gift and grant; how will he not with this freely give thee all things? Canst thou doubt of his liberality as to other things, when he does not withhold his infinitely glorious self? Canst thou doubt of his fulfilling any other promise of the covenant, when thou hast set to the seal of faith to this, with application of it to thy soul, *I am the Lord thy God.*

I might here, for the believer's consolation, and the encouragement of his faith, show how this covenant-promise draws all the rest of the promises in its train, they being inseparably connected with it. To instance only in a few, instead of many. *I am the Lord thy God:* therefore "I will give thee a heart to know me." *I am the Lord thy God:* therefore "I will sprinkle thee with clean water, and thou shalt be clean; from all thy filthiness, and from all thine idols will I cleanse thee." *I am the Lord thy God:* therefore "I will be merciful to thy unrighteousness, and thy sins and iniquities will I remember no more." *I am the Lord thy God:* therefore "I will put my Spirit within thee, and cause thee to walk in my statutes, and thou shalt keep my judgments, and do them." And so of all the other promises of the covenant; they are all "yea and amen in him," who is *the Lord thy God.* He who is so kind and good, as to make over himself to thee as thy God, will infallibly make out and make good every promise; and thou mayst trust him, with assured confidence, that he will do it, because he has said, *I am the Lord thy God.* O let not the frequent repetition of these words make them unsavoury; for there is more than ten thousand millions of heavens of glory in them to the soul that views them with the eye of faith in the light of the Spirit.

I might farther add, for the believer's comfort, that this

promise, *I am the Lord thy God*, draws along with it the sweetest and most endearing offices and relations that can be imagined. To instance in a few:—

1. He who is thy God, is thy sun to enlighten, direct, warm and fructify thy soul with his benign and gracious influences, Psal. lxxxiv. 11. The day-spring from on high hath begun to visit thee, the day-star hath arisen in thy heart; and though clouds may overcast thy sky, yet the Sun of righteousness will break through them, and return with the refreshing visits of everlasting kindness; for "his goings forth are prepared," or secured, "as the morning. Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall," Mal. iv. 2.

2. The Lord thy God is a shield to protect and defend thee against all the attacks of thy temporal or spiritual enemies. When sin, Satan, and the world, come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against them. He is "the strength of the poor, the strength of the needy in their distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall." Thy God is "the shield of thy help, and the sword of thy excellency; he rides in the heaven for thy help, and in his excellency on the skies."

3. Thy God is thy reward: "Fear not," says the Lord to Abraham, "I am thy shield and thy exceeding great reward," Gen. xv. 1. He is not only thy rewarder, but he himself is thy reward. And thy God being thy reward, it must be exceeding great, great beyond all expression or imagination; it is exceeding great beyond what eye ever saw, or ear heard, or hath entered into the heart of man to conceive. Surely such a reward cannot be of debt, but of grace only. It is the reward, not of our service or obedience, but the reward of the obedience and death of our glorious Surety. He is the righteous new Heir, and we are "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ."

4. Thy God, believer, is thy friend. There is a covenant of friendship implied in my text, *I am the Lord thy God*. It is said of Abraham that he was "the friend of God;" and the friendship is mutual. Whatever kind offices ever one friend performed to another, these doth thy God perform to thee. Thy God as a friend, sympathizes with thee in all thy afflictions, Is. lxiii. 9; supplies thy needs, Phil. iv. 19; imparts his secrets to thee, the secrets of his covenant, and mysteries of his kingdom, which he hides from the rest of the world, Matth. xiii. 11; promises to bear thee company through fire and water, life, and death, Is. xliii. 2. As a friend, he will

pay you kindly visits, and meet you more than half way when you come to visit him: "Thou meetest him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, those that remember thee in thy ways."

5. Thy God, believer, is thy Father: 2 Cor. vi. 16, 17: "I will be their God, and they shall be my people. And, ver. 18, it is added, "I will be a father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.—Behold, what manner of love is this, that we should be called the sons of God!" Let men and angels wonder at it, that we who are sprung of hell, should be dignified with a name among the general assembly and church of the first-born. Thy God is thy Father; and, as a tender-hearted father, his eye is upon thee for good, his ear is open unto thy cry, his heart follows thee wherever thou goest, his hand is ready to help thee and hold thee up, his Spirit, in and by the word, to counsel and comfort thee, his house of many mansions prepared and ready to receive thee, whenever thou art dislodged from the earthly house of this tabernacle.

6. Thy God is thy husband: Is. liv. 5: "Thy Maker is thy husband, the Lord of hosts is his name; and thy Redeemer the holy One of Israel." Thy name before him is Hephzibah and Beulah; he rejoices over thee, as the bridegroom rejoiceth over his bride. There is a complication of interests betwixt him and thee; and thy concerns are so much his, that whatever action the law has against thee, he is bound by virtue of his relation to thee as a husband, to cover and defend thee against all evil.

7. Thy God, believer, is thy very life, yea, the strength of thy life; Psal. xxvii. 1: "The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?" Thy God lives; and "because he lives, thou shalt live also.—The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock: and let the God of my salvation be exalted." Thus, you see by these little hints, what this promise, *I am the Lord thy God*, draws after it for the consolation of the believer, who has by faith laid hold of it, and so obeyed the first command. O sirs, faith's views of the grace wrapped up in this promise, would make us all to join issue with David, Psal. xxxi. 19: "O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee; which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men! So much for the use of comfort.

The *last* use I make of this subject is of *Exhortation*. 1. To all in general. 2. To believers.

First, A word of exhortation to all in general, to obey and keep the first commandment, by taking hold of this covenant-grant, *I am the Lord thy God:* which is all one, as if I should

exhort you to believe in Christ, or receive and rest upon him alone, &c. When a sinner believes in Christ, what does he else but receive God in Christ, as his God, by virtue of the covenant of grace, placing his only rest and happiness through eternity in the enjoyment of him alone? And is not this the very thing required in the first commmandment, or a having no other gods before him? The gospel, holding forth the object of faith, and the command requiring the obedience of faith, has been one and the same in all ages of the world, however differently expressed and dispensed. We generally look upon the law of God, delivered to Israel at mount Sinai, as binding and obligatory upon us; and no doubt it is the rule of obedience to all mankind to the end of the world, who shall read or hear of it. And I am so far from thinking, or teaching, that the obligation of the holy law is dissolved by the grace of the gospel, that I think it plain, from the connexion Infinite Wisdom has laid betwixt them here, it is simply impossible any man can share of the grace of the gospel, but in a way of obedience to the very first commandment of the law, as already explained. And, therefore, my exhortation to every one hearing me is, to yield obedience to this first commandment of the law; lay claim by faith to a God in Christ as your God, by virtue of the covenant, where he says, *I am the Lord thy God;* and see that you *have no other gods before him.* Do not think that I exhort you to this, as though I supposed you had any strength or power of your own to obey. No, we are naturally without strength, wholly impotent to do any thing spiritually good: but when I exhort you to obey this commandment, I exhort you to obey it in a dependence upon the grace of him who commands you to have him as your own God, and who engages himself by covenant to be our God, and so to be the author and finisher of our faith.

Now, to quicken your compliance, to excite your obedience, consider these few particulars, upon which I shall not much enlarge.

1. Consider, that, by the breach of the first covenant, you and I have forfeited all claim and title to the Lord as our God. Indeed, he never ceased to be our sovereign Lord-Creator; in no state can this relation to God be dissolved; this relation stands even in the state of the damned. But, I say, by the violation of the holy law, we have lost our covenant-relation to God, as our God, our Father, our friend, our portion: and having lost our God, we have lost our life, peace, comfort, and happiness for ever; and not only so, but are under his wrath and curse, and so are liable to all miseries in soul and body through time and eternity. Now, by hearkening to

this exhortation, all this unspeakable loss is repaired. Here you have God coming in a new and better covenant, even in a covenant of grace, saying, *I am the Lord thy God*; yea, requiring thee, by his sovereign authority, to take him again as thy own God, and thy only God, upon the footing of this new grant of grace. O what sinner is it, that considers his own eternal interest, but will comply with this command, in knowing and acknowledging the Lord as his God! Who would not take back the forfeiture upon such an easy ground!

2. Consider who it is that says, *I am the Lord thy God*: who it is that issues out this command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* It is he "whose name alone is JEHOVAH, the most high over all the earth;" he who "doth whatever pleaseth him in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" he who "humbles himself when he beholds things in heaven," cherubims and seraphims, angels and archangels. O what astonishing grace and condescension is it in this God, to come to a sinful worm of the fallen family of Adam, saying, *I am the Lord thy God!* O shall we not fall in with the design of such condescending grace, and say, We will have no other gods before him! "This God is our God for ever and ever!" If we do not, we "reject the counsel of God against ourselves," and despise the riches of his grace.

3. Consider, that this is the very first duty of natural and revealed religion, to know and acknowledge God as the only true God, and our God. The light of nature teaches us to own him as our creating God, upon the ground of that revelation he makes of himself to us in the works of creation and providence. Revealed religion teaches us to own him as our God in Christ, upon the ground of his own promise and grant, *I am the Lord thy God.* So that, till this command be obeyed, a man is an Atheist, an idolater, without God in the world, and is an utter stranger both to natural and revealed religion. Wo, wo, wo, to the man or woman that is in such a case; thou art condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on thee, because thou rejectest JEHOVAH in the person of the Son as thy God and Redeemer; and upon the matter, sayest I will have other gods before him, I will not have him as the Lord my God.

4. Consider, thou canst perform no duty of the law acceptably until thou obeyest this command, and close with this covenant-grant, as was cleared already. All thy acts of obedience to the other commandments, are but splendid sins, an abomination to God, till this covenant-grant be received, in obedience to the first precept of his law. The soul of all

obedience is wanting, till a man begin here; hence all his works are but dead works.

5. Consider, how willing he is to be thy God, even thine *own God*, O sinner. If he were not willing, would he ever speak in such a dialect to thee as here, saying, *I am the Lord thy God?* Would he ever lay thee under such a command of love, as to say, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me?* thou shalt know and acknowledge me as thy own God and portion, as thy only hope and happiness in time and through eternity? O do not suspect his candour and ingenuousness for "the Strength of Israel will not lie;" he hates it in others, and therefore it is impossible he can be guilty of it himself. We would reckon that man a blasphemer, who, with his mouth, should utter such words as these, It is not as God says; he is not the Lord my God: and yet this blasphemy every unbelieving sinner is guilty of; he makes God a liar, and denies that God speaks the truth in his heart, when he says to him, *I am the Lord thy God;* and, at the same time, rebels against his authority, requiring him to make faith's application of this covenant-grant to his own soul.

6. Consider, there is an absolute necessity that thou shouldst lay hold on this covenant-grant in obedience to this command. Why, there is no living, and no safe dying, without God. Without God, thou art without hope in the world: without God, thou, and all thou hast in the world, are cursed; cursed in thy basket and store, in thy house and field, in thy out-goings and in-comings. Without God you cannot die, without dying the second death, as well as the first: "They that are far from thee shall perish. What wilt thou do," O sinner, "in the day of visitation," who livest in disobedience to this command, and refusest the grace contained in this covenant-grant? "to whom wilt thou flee for help? and where wilt thou leave thy glory?" How will you look God in the face, when arraigned before his awful tribunal? What a knell will it give to thy heart, when thou hearest this, as the first and leading article of thy indictment, There is the man who would not know and acknowledge me as his God and Redeemer! me, who stretched out my arms of grace to embrace him, and whose bowels sent out a sound after him, saying, *I am the Lord thy God: Thou shalt have no other gods before me!* he preferred self and the world to me, and therefore now "I will laugh at his calamity, and mock when his fear is come" upon him. O "consider this, ye that forget God, lest he tear you in pieces, and there be none to deliver" out of his hand.

7. Consider what advantage will redound to thy soul by obeying this command with an eye to the covenant-promise.

Thou art made up for ever; all salvation, as you heard, is wrapped up in this one word, *I am the Lord thy God.* And in the faith of it thou mayest go through the valley of the shadow of death, without fearing any evil; for thy God is with thee, he will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

But I shall not farther insist in pressing this exhortation with arguments. One would think that no man who believes a future state of eternal happiness or misery, needs to be much urged to know and acknowledge God in Christ as his God, upon this new grant of sovereign grace; this being the very hinge upon which a comfortable eternity turns. All I shall do farther, in prosecuting this exhortation, is, to answer a few objections which carnal reason and unbelief will very readily muster up against this doctrine and exhortation.

Object. 1. May one say, I have lost all claim and title to the Lord as my God, by violating the holy law; and I think I hear God saying to me with a frown, "How shall I put thee among the children," who hast forfeited thy relation to me? and therefore I dare not own and acknowledge him as the Lord my God. *Answ.* It is indeed true, that you and I, and all mankind, have lost our title and relation to him as our God by the first Adam, and the breach of the first covenant: and since the fall of Adam, God never said to any sinner upon a law-ground, *I am the Lord thy God;* no, when a sinner looks at that quarter, his hope and strength perishes for ever from the Lord. But, O sirs, here is a new covenant, a new gift or grant that God makes of himself, which does not go upon the ground of our obedience to the law as its condition, but upon the ground of sovereign grace, reigning through the righteousness of God-man: here, I say, is a new claim of right presented to the guilty sinner, *I am the Lord thy God;* "I will be unto them a Father, and they shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty." These and the like absolute and indefinite promises are universally dispensed to all and every one as the ground of faith. And, lest any sinner, through a sense of guilt, should fear to lay hold upon this new claim of right, here is the warrant subjoined and annexed to the claim, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me.*

Object. 2. I am afraid lest God be not saying this to me in particular, *I am the Lord thy God;* and therefore dare not lay hold of it. I fear lest he be not requiring me in particular, by this commandment, to know and acknowledge him as my God. *Answ.* It is by these and the like groundless surmises and insinuations, that an evil heart of unbelief turns us away from the living God, and from taking hold of his cove-

nant. But pray, tell me, in good earnest, do you think to dispute away the binding obligation of the very first commandment of the law of God? for, as was said, at the same time that you refuse to take hold of this covenant-grant, you disobey the first and leading precept of the law. Why, will you own the obligation of the other commandments of the law, and reject this? I suppose there are none of you but will readily acknowledge, that you in particular are bound to honour your parents, not to kill, steal, commit adultery, &c. You may with as good reason say or think, that these other precepts do not bind you in particular, as imagine that you are not particularly bound by the first to know and acknowledge a God in Christ as your God. Why so much prejudiced against the first and chief commandment of God beyond all others? What account can be rendered for it, that men should thrust away from them the first commandment of the very law of nature, when grafted into the gospel-covenant, and made so subservient to their eternal salvation? I know of no solid reason that can be given for it but that of the apostle, "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not."

Object. 3. I cannot refuse that the command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me,* is binding upon me in particular; but I can never think that it is to me in particular that God is saying, *I am the Lord thy God. Answ.* Who authorized you, or any of Adam's race, to put asunder what God has joined? I am sure it is not by God's warrant that this is done; and therefore you may easily divine that it is from a worse source. It is the great plot of Satan to break that connexion which God has laid between the gospel and the law; for he knows very well, that if the gospel be separate from the law, or the law from the gospel, in the matter of practice, not one of the commandments of the law can be obeyed to purpose. And this first command in particular, if it be disjoined from the gospel-promise laid in the preface, *I am the Lord thy God,* can no more be obeyed by a sinner, than if he were commanded to pull the sun or moon out of the firmament. Pray consider, while you own the obligations of the precept, and mean while refuse your interest or concern with the preface, you acknowledge your obligation to obedience, and yet at the same time cast away the foundation upon which your obedience is to stand; thus you build without a foundation, and how can that building stand? It will fall, and great will be the fall of it. And, therefore, in the name of God, I proclaim that this promise, *I am the Lord thy God,* is to you, and your seed, and to all that are afar off. Did not God speak to every individual in the camp, when he uttered these words,

I am the Lord thy God; as well as when he added, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me?* The same is he saying to you, and me, and every one of us; and therefore let us not cast away our own mercy; to us, as well as unto them, "belong the adoption, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the promises."

Object. 4. What if all that is intended in these words, *I am the Lord thy God*, be only either an assertion of divine sovereignty, or of an external federal relation to Israel as the seed and posterity of Abraham, and the only visible church? And if so, where is there a foundation in them for me to believe in him as the Lord my God? *Answ.* I am far from excluding any of these things the objection mentions as comprehended in these words, *I am the Lord thy God:* and I grant, that if no more were included in them, I do not see how they could be a foundation of special and saving faith to me, or any else. But that it is otherwise, will not readily be denied by any, if they consider what it is God requires of us in the first command, as inseparably connected with the preface. Pray consider it a little. Is this all that God calls for by the first precept of his law, to know and acknowledge him as our sovereign Lord-Creator, or that he is a God to the visible church by external federal relation? No doubt, these are truths indispensable to be believed: but there is more required; namely, to believe that he is the Lord our God in Christ, and to worship and glorify him accordingly. The external federal relation that God bears to the visible church, becomes special when this promise is applied by a saving faith; hence this is the common argument with which Israel is urged to believe and repent through all the Old Testament; particularly Psal. lxxxi. 9—11. And whenever saving faith was acted, by which their return to him was influenced, they commonly fasten upon and apply this fundamental promise in my text, Jer. iii. 22. So that, I say, there is more in these words, *I am the Lord thy God*, than a bare assertion of divine sovereignty, or of his covenant-relation to Israel as a visible church; there is in them a glorious new covenant-grant or gift that God makes of himself to us in Christ as our God, to be applied by a saving faith: and when such a faith is acted upon it, the native echo of the soul to it is, "This God is my God." I believe it, because he himself hath said it, and said it not to others only, but to me in particular. "I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." It is true, indeed, no man can speak this dialect of faith without the Holy Spirit; but to say that there is not sufficient ground for a particular applicatory faith in the bare word or promise of God, abstractly considered, is to apologize

for the unbelief of the hearers of the gospel, and to run into the error of the enthusiasts, who suspend the duty of believing, not upon the word of God, but upon the work and light of the Spirit within.

Object. 5. If this promise be made to every one in the visible church, how shall the veracity of the Promiser be salved, or vindicated, seeing there are many who come short of it, many to whom he never becomes their God in a special covenant-relation.

To this objection I might answer, by way of retort, How is it that the unbeliever makes God a liar, if the promise be not made to him in particular? For if the promise, and the faithfulness of the Promiser, be not to him, he cannot be blamed for not believing, or not setting his seal to a promise never made to him. Can he be condemned for not intermeddling with a thing that does not belong to him? Again, I ask, How was it that God, in a consistency with his faithfulness, made unbelieving Israel to know his breach of promise, Numb. xiv. 34, after he had made a grant or gift of the land of Canaan to them, and promised to bring them into it, while yet they never were allowed to enter it, but dropped their carcasses in the wilderness; God having sworn that they should not enter into his rest. The faithfulness of God, in breaking his promise that he had made to that generation, is salved by landing the blame upon their own unbelief; "they believed not his word, they trusted not in his salvation." They gave more credit to the false lying report of the wicked spies, than to the word and promise of him for whom "it is impossible to lie;" and because they "made God a liar," therefore his promise made to them turned to be of no effect to them. In like manner, a promise is left us of entering into a spiritual and eternal rest; but mean time most have reason to fear lest God make them to know his breach of promise, by excluding them out of that promised rest, because of their unbelief. The faithfulness of God is not in the least impeached hereby, because the unbeliever calls his faithfulness in question, and rejects his promise, as a thing not worthy of regard. Can a man be charged with unfaithfulness, in not bestowing himself and his estate upon a woman to whom he has made a promise of marriage, if the woman to whom it was made refuse his offer and promise? The faithfulness of the bankers of Scotland is engaged in particular to the bearer of their note; but if the bearer shall tear the note, or throw it away as a piece of useless paper, their veracity is nowise impeached, though they never pay that man the sum contained in their note; so here.

Object. 6. If I could find the marks and evidences of saving

grace once wrought in my soul, then indeed I could acknowledge and believe the Lord is my God; but till then I dare not, neither do I think it my duty. *Answ.* I do own that none can warrantably draw this conclusion that they are in a state of grace, within the bond of the covenant, or savingly interested in the Lord as their God, till they have examined the matter at the bar of the word, and upon trial have found such marks of grace as warrant them to draw such a conclusion. But this is not the question now under consideration. The question at present is, Whether it be lawful and warrantable for a poor sinner, who is so far from finding any works of grace or gracious qualifications in himself, that he can see nothing but sin and misery, feels himself to be an heir of hell and wrath: whether, I say, it be his duty, upon the footing of this covenant-grant and promise, *I am the Lord thy God*, to know, believe, and acknowledge the Lord as his God? And if this be the question, which it must be, it is all one as if it were asked, whether it be the immediate duty of such a person to obey the first command of the moral law as it stands under a covenant of grace? or, Whether a person is to forbear obedience to the first command in the law of God, till he find gracious qualifications wrought in his soul. To affirm which, were upon the matter to say, that the first commandment of the law does not enjoin the first duty of religion; but that something is to be done before we do the thing that God requires of us in the first place as the foundation of all other acts of obedience; and that is, to know and believe that God in Christ is our God, by virtue of a covenant of grace contained in these words, *I am the Lord thy God.* Such strange absurdities we inevitably run ourselves into, when we keep not in the cleanly path of faith chalked out to us in the word.

Object. 7. We fear that this way of teaching [would] lead us in to a presumptuous confidence: and therefore we are are afraid to meddle with it. *Answ.* God teaches no man to presume when he requires him to have no other gods before him. Your approved Catechism does not teach you to presume, when it tells you, that God in this commandment requires you to know and acknowledge him as God, and as your God; and that because he is the Lord, and *our* God, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments. But, besides, as I told you in the use of trial, the man who in a presumptuous way lays claim to the Lord as his God, either lays claim to him out of Christ, or he does it not upon the footing of the faithfulness of God engaged in the covenant; or else, while he says with his mouth that the Lord is his God, says to the man, "What hast thou to do to make mention of

my covenant? seeing thou" hast other gods before me in thy heart, and thus thou "hatest instruction, and castest my counsel behind thy back."

Object. 8. God is angry, he carries towards me as an enemy, he smites by the word and rod; how then shall I adventure to say he is the Lord my God? *Answ.* It is true God was angry; but his angry or vindictive wrath having spent itself upon our glorious Surety, we may now say, with the church, Is. xii. 1: "His anger is turned away, and he comforteth us. Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid." Having smelt a sweet savour in the sacrifice of the death of Christ, the deluge of wrath is recalled, and a proclamation issued out, "Fury is not in me:" *I am the Lord thy God: Thou shalt have no other gods before me.* O sirs, this is not the language of anger and wrath, but the language of love, mercy, and of infinite bowels of pity and good will toward man upon earth. As for the appearance of anger in his dispensations, "no man can know either love or hatred, by all that is before him:" the only way to judge of the love of his heart, is to read it in and by his words of grace; for these, and not his external dispensations, are the exact portraiture of his deep and infinite heart. It is true, indeed, we are told that "God is angry with the wicked every day:" but what is his grand and fundamental quarrel with them? It is this, that though he has said, *I am the Lord thy God and Redeemer;* though he has given such a glorious proof of this as to give his only-begotten Son, and to give him up to the death for our redemption; though he has engaged his faithfulness to us in a new covenant; yet they will not know and acknowledge the Lord as God, and as their God, but will have some other gods before him. To conclude, the design of all the threatenings of the word, and of all the angry-like dispensations of his providence, is, that we may flee from his wrath, and may not "rush upon the thick bosses of his buckler," but may turn to him as our God in Christ, and live, Ezek. xxxiii. 11.

Object. 9. What if it was only to the elect or believers in the camp of Israel that God spake, when he said, *I am the Lord thy God?* If so, they cannot be a foundation of faith to all. *Answ.* This objection still breaks the connexion God has made betwixt the promise and the precept, which must not be. I believe no man will adventure to say, that the command, *Thou shalt have no other gods before me,* was only to the elect or believers; but to the elect and reprobate, believers and unbelievers. The whole law was given to every man, no man excepted: now, did God tie them all to obedience by his command, and yet at the same time take away

the foundation of obedience, which lies in the promise? No; the one must run parallel with the other; the promise in its exhibition must be as extensive as the obligation of the command; the object of faith must be presented to all whose duty it is to believe; the promise is among things revealed as well as the precept, and therefore equally belongs to us. "What God has joined let no man separate." It is true, these words, *I am the Lord thy God*, considered as in his mind, purpose, and decree, belonged only to the elect; but considered as uttered or spoken indefinitely, they cease to be a decree with respect to us; we are to look upon them as a promise tendered to us as the ground of our faith; and so they have a respect to every one commanded to have him as his own God.

I shall shut up this discourse with two or three words of exhortation or advice to you who have in reality obeyed this first commandment of the royal law, by laying hold upon God in Christ as your God, by virtue of his faithfulness engaged in this glorious grant, *I am the Lord thy God.* O what shall we, or what can we, render to him, who, after we had lost him as our God by sin, renders himself back to us in a new covenant, sealing it with his own blood, and attesting it by the three that bear record in heaven! There are these few things the Lord thy God requires of thee in a way of gratitude:

1. Love him as thy God, and love all that bear his image; for this is the sum of the ten commandments, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, with all thy soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." This "love is the fulfilling of the law."

2. Trust him as thy God; "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength. Trust in him at all times, ye people." Trust him for every promised blessing; and ask them of him in prayer, for they are agreeable to his will. "And this is the confidence that we have toward him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us." "Cast all thy cares upon thy God, *and* in every thing by prayer and supplication, let your requests be made known unto him."

3. Worship him as thy God: "He is thy Lord, and worship thou him." And O worship him in the beauties of holiness, for "holiness becomes his house for ever."

4. "Walk before thy God, and be thou perfect." "All people will walk every one in the name of his god, and we will walk in the name of the Lord our God for ever and ever." "Walk worthy of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light." "Let your light so shine before

men, as others seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

5. Praise, extol, and magnify him as your God: Exod. xv. 2: "He is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." Let the high praises of thy God be continually in thy mouth, that he ever said to thy soul, *I am the Lord thy God.* Join issue with David, Psal. xviii. 46, saying, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my Rock: and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

6. *Lastly,* Disband all other gods: *Thou shalt have no other gods before me:* let nothing usurp his room. "Little children, keep yourself from idols." "Hear, O my people, and I will testify unto thee: O Israel, if thou wilt hearken unto me; there shall no strange god be in thee: neither shalt thou worship any strange god." *I am the Lord thy God,* Psal. lxxi. 8—10.

SERMON XXI.

THE STANDARD OF HEAVEN LIFTED UP AGAINST THE POWERS OF HELL, AND THEIR AUXILIARIES.*

When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.—Isa. lix. 19.

From the 16th verse of this chapter and downward, we have an illustrious prophecy concerning our glorious Redeemer, and the salvation he was to work for lost sinners by his obedience unto the death. He is introduced as a renowned champion, taking the field in our quarrel, when there was none to interpose for our deliverance from the thraldom of hell and sin. He puts on his armour, ver. 17. And what is it? Righteousness is his breastplate, salvation his helmet, vengeance against Satan and his confederates his clothing, and zeal for his Father's glory and our good his cloak or mantle. Being thus armed, he distributes death and ruin among all those who stand in the way of his undertaking, ver. 18:

* The substance of some sermons preached upon different occasions, at the celebration of the Lord's supper in Kinclaven, Burntisland, and Orwell, *anno* 1730.

"According to their deeds, accordingly he will r[epay] to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies," &c.

Thus, having carried the day, spoiled principal powers, the fame thereof spreads among the Gentile[s] upon the wings of the everlasting gospel. And what is the fruit of this? Ver. 19: "So shall they fear the name of the Lord from the west, and his glory from the rising of the sun." The meaning is, that the Gentile nations should come from east and west to the kingdom of the New Testament church, which is the nursery for the kingdom of glory; when the Jews, who had been for a long time the only children of the kingdom, should be cast out into utter darkness, because of their unbelief, in rejecting and crucifying the Lord of glory.

But now, when the powers of hell are thus overthrown by a glorious Redeemer, and his New Testament church reared up among the Gentiles; will the routed enemy ever rally his forces, or molest the church of God any more?—Yes, says the prophet, after all this, *the enemy will come in like a flood*; but though he do, he shall not succeed in his attempts, for *the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.*

So then, in the words we have these two things in general. 1. An attack made by the gates of hell upon the church of God: *The enemy shall come in like a flood.* 2. We have a repulse given him: *The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.*

1. I say, we have an attack made by hell and its auxiliaries upon the kingdom and interest of Christ: *The enemy shall come in like a flood.* Where again we may notice, (1.) By whom the attack is made; it is by *the enemy.* The church of God, or his saints in this world, have many enemies, as you may hear afterward. They are expressed in the singular number, because of their unity in their designs against Christ and his kingdom, and because they attack under one principal leader and commander, namely, the god of this world, whose kingdom Christ came to overthrow. (2.) We may notice the manner of the enemy's attack; he comes in *like a flood*, with great violence and noise, as though he would sweep away all clean before him, Rev. xii. 15, we read that "the serpent cast out of his mouth water as a flood after the woman; that he might cause her to be carried away of the flood." It is no unusual thing in scripture, to represent the irruptions of hell and its armies upon the church of God, under the notion of a rapid flood or river, which threatens the ruin of every thing that stands in its way, Psal. xciii. 3: "The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice." (3.) We have the progress of the enemy, or

how far the attack may be carried; he shall *come in:* he shall not stay without the walls or borders, like an enemy laying siege, and going no farther; but he shall *come in*, and "overflow even to the neck." Satan has a party within the church to take him by the hand; yea, he has a party within the very heart of the elect to side with him. (4.) We have the certainty of all this; it is not a may-be, or a peradventure, but there is a certainty of it: *The enemy* SHALL *come in like a flood;* the Lord has said it, and therefore it needs be no surprise when it comes.

2. In the words we may notice the repulse given to the enemy, after all his progress: *The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.* Where again we may notice, (1.) By whom the repulse is given, by the *Spirit of the Lord.* It is not by the might or the power of the church, it is not by any created strength, but "by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." (2.) How the repulse is given, or managed; it is by *lifting up a standard against him.* By the *standard* I understand Christ, who is not only "a standard-bearer among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10, but the standard or ensign itself, Is. xi. 10: "And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." By the *lifting up* of the standard, I understand the displays of the glory of Christ in a gospel-dispensation, accompanied with the efficacy of the Spirit of the Lord: this is called a lifting up of Christ, John iii. 14, 15: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up." It is by the lifting up of this standard, or the manifestation of Christ in the gospel, that Satan's kingdom is ruined in the world, and his strong holds pulled down. (3.) We have the repulse itself given to the enemy by the Spirit of the Lord; he is *put to flight,* as it reads in the margin: or, as Calvin reads it, the Spirit of the Lord shall drive him back like the waters of Jordan, which were driven back toward their fountain, when they stood in the way of Israel's entry upon the possession of the promised land, Psal. cxiv. 5: "What ailed thee, O thou sea, that thou fleddest? thou Jordan, that thou wast driven back?" (4.) We have the certainty of this promise of repelling or driving back the enemy; it is not a may-be, but a *shall*-be. As there is a certainty respecting the in-breaking of the enemy; so there is as great a certainty of his being beaten back by the Spirit of the Lord: "Hath he said it, and will he not do it?"

From the words thus opened, I notice these two doctrines:

Doct. 1. "That the church of God, or true believers, while here in a militant state, may lay their account with it to have the enemy breaking in upon them like a flood."

Doct. 2. "That the career of the enemy is stopped, and his attempts baffled, by the Spirit of the Lord lifting up a standard against him. When the enemy shall come in like a flood," &c.

As to the *first* of these, "That believers, while in a militant state, may lay their account to have the enemy breaking in upon them like a flood:"

In discoursing on this, I shall, through divine assistance, endeavour to show,

I. Who is the enemy that comes in like a flood.

II. Why this enemy is likened to a flood.

III. Speak a little of the progress of this enemy, and how far he may come in.

IV. Touch a little at the certainty of this, that he shall come in like a flood.

V. Conclude in a few inferences.

I. The *first* thing is to *give some account of the enemy, that is said to come in like a flood upon the church and people of God.* This is no improper subject after you have been at the communion table. If the great Master of the feast has brought you into his banqueting-house, and made you to sit down under his banner of love; if he has stayed you with flagons, and comforted you with apples; you are to remember, that this is not heaven, it is only a wilderness-meal to hearten you for your journey; and, in your journey you are to go through the "dens of lions, and mountains of leopards." The people of God never meet with more violent attacks for ordinary, than after they have been admitted to the nearest and sweetest communion: Satan sought to winnow Peter, after he had been at the first supper; a messenger of Satan is sent to buffet Paul, after he had been wrapt up to the third heavens. But, say you, who is the enemy that is like to come in upon us? I answer, The devil, that old serpent, called sometimes "the god of this world," is the leading enemy of the woman and her seed. This was the grand enemy Christ had to debate with, when he came upon the great undertaking of our redemption; his errand was, to beat up the devil's quarters, to drive him out of his usurped possession in the hearts and souls of men, to bruise his head, to destroy his works, to spoil principalities and powers of their

prey. And as this was the principal enemy that Christ had to grapple with, so this is the leading enemy that attacks the seed of Christ in their travels through the wilderness to the promised land of glory. Hence is that caution of the apostle Peter, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." And, says Paul, "We wrestle not against flesh and blood; but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickednesses in high places." Now, the devil has two grand auxiliaries, in managing his hellish designs against Christ and his seed, which are entirely at his devotion, and under his command, the one is within the believer, and the other without him.

1. I say, Satan has a strong party within, to wit, indwelling sin and corruption, "a law in the members warring against the law of the mind;" sometimes called "the flesh, which lusteth against the Spirit." This is such a crafty enemy, and its workings in order to serve the designs of Satan, for the ruin of the soul, are so subtle, that it is said to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." David, the man according to God's own heart, through the impression of its subtlety, cries, "Who can understand his errors?"

2. The world without us is another main auxiliary of hell; the profits, pleasures, and preferments of the world, called by the apostle, "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life." The apostle James, chap. iv. 4, has a word to this purpose, "Know ye not (saith he,) that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever, therefore, will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God." From whence it is plain, that that man that will stand upon the Lord's side, must resolve to have the world upon his top. Sometimes the believer has the powers of this world to contend with; especially when their commands interfere with the commands of God; as in the case of Daniel, the apostles, and the three children; and in that case he may lay his account with rage and violence. In a word, the devil being "the god of this world," he hath both the things and the persons of this world under his power, he pretends to be sole master of it; as we see in his attack he made upon the Son of God in the wilderness, "All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me." Sometimes he makes use of the world as a bait to allure us to sin; sometimes he makes use of it as a bugbear to fright us from duty. Thus, you see who is the enemy that comes in like a flood, to wit, Satan and his auxiliaries, both without us and within us.

II. The *second* thing in the method is, to *inquire why this enemy is likened to a flood?* I answer, in the following particulars:—

1. Because of their noise. What noise has the devil, the world, and the lusts and corruptions of men, made since the fall of man, by error, persecution, defections, and violences of all kinds! and what a noise do these enemies make in the soul of the believer, when God, for holy and wise ends, lets them loose! The poor soul is many times put in such confusion, through the noise of these mighty waters, that it cannot hear the voice of God either in his word or providences.

2. They are likened to a flood, because of their multitude. A flood consists of an innumerable multitude of drops of water. So these enemies the believer has to grapple with in his way to glory, are a great multitude, an innumerable host. We may easily gather that the infernal spirits, that go about to devour us, are innumerable, when we consider, that a whole legion of them had their residence in one poor man. And how many are the lusts of the heart and the snares of the world, which we lie every day exposed to? David complains, Psal. cxviii. that his enemies "compassed *him* about like bees;" which many times put the poor believer to cry with Jehoshaphat, "We know not what to do against this great multitude that comes up against us."

3. They are likened to floods, because of their unity in bending all one way in their opposition against Christ and his cause. Whatever jarrings there may be among them in other things, yet as the waters of a flood, though they may take different channels, yet they keep the same course, and unite their force against the kingdom of Christ, and the salvation of souls.

4. Floods are mighty, violent, and rapid in their motion; the waters of a flood have a mighty strength with them. So the enemies of the Lord's people are violent and strong in their opposition to the interests of Christ in the world, and his grace in the soul: Psal. ii. the Heathen are there said to "rage against the Lord, and his Anointed, saying, Let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us."

5. Floods of water are of a sweeping nature, and are ready to hurl down every thing that is not well fixed: if a tree have not its root well fastened in the ground, the flood will bear it down. Just so, if a person be not "rooted in Christ," the floods of temptation, afflictions, and corruptions, will very soon carry him down the stream. Hence it is, that loose professors in a day of trial are carried away; their house falls, and great is the fall of it.

6. A flood is in a continual motion; so the actings of sin, and Satan, and the world, against Christ and his cause, are incessant: "The wicked are like the troubled sea, still casting out mire and filth."

Here I will name several sweeping floods that the enemy casts forth, to annoy and hurt the church and people of God in the wilderness.

1*st*, He sometimes casts out a flood of error; he studies to corrupt the simplicity of the gospel, and to turn men away from the pure and precious truths of God. Hell has in all ages of the world been studying to muddy the pure waters of the sanctuary, and never more than at this day, by Arian, Socinian, Arminian, Pelagian, and other heresies.

2*dly*, Sometimes the enemy comes in with a flood of open persecution. The boar out of the wood, and the wild beasts of the forest, are sometimes suffered to devour the Lord's people, so that their blood has been poured out like water, and the bodies of God's dear saints cast out like dung upon the streets. Such a flood, of heading, hanging, quartering, banishing, and imprisoning of the Lord's people has been in this land, and we know not how soon the like flood may break out again.

3*dly*, Sometimes he comes in with a flood of manifold corruptions upon the visible church. Sometimes he studies to corrupt the worship of God by superstition, mingling in ceremonies of man's inventions with the pure ordinances of divine institution. Sometimes he breaks in upon the government and discipline of the church, attempting to introduce schemes of government not warranted by the word of God. Sometimes he stirs up men of corrupt minds, to pervert the use of the keys of discipline, to the spoiling and robbing of the church of God of her privileges and immunities he has granted her. Sometimes he comes in with a flood of profanity corrupting the lives of professors, to the scandal of religion; sometimes with a flood of neutrality and indifference about the things of God, under the colour of moderation. These, and many other floods, does Satan cast forth, by which he sweeps multitudes away to hell. And, O sirs, take heed to yourselves, for many of these floods are running with a mighty current among us at this day.

III. The *third* thing is, to *speak a little of the progress of the enemy; he is said to* come in.

Quest. How far may he come in?

Answ. 1. The enemy may come in within the borders of Zion: Mic. v. 5, 6: "This man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he treadeth

within our borders." Satan and his confederates have their synagogues even within the confines of the visible church.

2. The enemy comes in, not only within the borders, but even into the palaces of Zion, her public assemblies for divine worship; these are called the "palaces" and "dwelling-places of Zion," Is. iv. 5: "When the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord, Satan came also among them," Job i. 6. Sometimes he enters these assemblies and dwelling-places of the church in a more open and visible way, corrupting the worship of God with idolatry and superstition; sometimes in a more secret and invisible way, stirring up enmity, unbelief, carnality, vanity of heart, to mar soul-benefit and advantage by the ordinances of divine appointment.

3. The enemy may come in, not only to the palaces, but to the pulpits of the church, by an erroneous and corrupt ministry; what has been, may be again: Jude 4: "There are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." The case may happen, that men shall appear in your pulpits, pretending to take the care and feeding of your souls, who will give you a stone for bread, and a scorpion instead of a fish. A corrupt ministry is the saddest plague that ever came into the church of God.

4. The enemy may come into the judicatories of the church, which are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David, where the people of God expect to be protected in their Christian liberties, and to have justice done them, against those who would spoil and oppress them; and yet, so far may the enemy come in, as to influence these judicatories to join hands with the spoilers and oppressors of the people of God, instead of defending them. The Jewish sanhedrim was an ecclesiastical court of God's appointment; and yet so far was it corrupted, that it condemned the Lord of glory, and excommunicated them that owned and professed the name of Jesus; and all under a specious colour, for the safety and welfare of the church. Christ must die, and be crucified, lest the Romans come and take away their kingdom.

5. The enemy may come in, not only to the gates of Zion, but also to the dwellings of Jacob. Sirs, Satan, the world, and corruptions, may, and I make no doubt, will follow you home to your several families; and it will be a wonder, if, after you have been at a communion table, Satan and his emissaries do not raise some family storm and trouble, to take off any impression of God, or of the things of God, that has been upon you on this occasion. The devil lodges in the

house of the wicked; and he may come in and work much mischief in the house of a godly David; witness the murder of Uriah, adultery with Bathsheba, Ammon's incest, Absalom's rebellion, Adonijah's conspiracy.

6. He may come into your closets, and go along with you to your knees, when you would incline to be alone with God, in order to divert your thoughts, disturb your minds, or alienate your affections from prayer, meditation, or other private duties that you set about. When Joshua appeared before the Lord, Satan stands at his right hand.

7. The enemy may come into your very heart. Satan has very easy access to the hearts of men, by the port of the imagination and outward senses: through these gates or windows of the soul, he can very easily throw in his fiery darts, by which, if a strict watch be not kept, he will infallibly set the whole combustible matter of indwelling sin and corruption as it were on fire: he has a way of drawing forth, by his temptations, the latent atheism, enmity, pride, carnality, and unbelief of the heart; he has no more ado, but to hiss upon his confederates in our bosom, and immediately they come forth out of their fastnesses, to assist him in carrying on his assaults. And God knows, how far even a believer may be driven, if the enemy come in thus upon him like a flood. Melancholy instances thereof are left upon record in scripture, in the case of Abraham, Moses, David, Solomon, Peter, and many others, which are set up, not for our imitation or encouragement in sin, but as beacons, that we may be upon our guard against the inroads of the enemy that wait for our halting.

IV. The *fourth* thing was, *to touch a little at the certainty of all this;* for it is not said, *may be* the enemy will come, but *the enemy* SHALL *come in like a flood.* The certainty of all this will appear from these two or three things.

1. Plain scripture-testimony, the infallible oracles of Heaven certifying us, that the enemy will be upon us, Rev. ii. 10: "The devil shall cast some of you into prison;—ye shall have tribulation ten days." As long as the seed of the woman is within Satan's reach, he will be creating them some molestation or other.

2. The state of the believer, while he is in this world, makes it evident. While the believer is hereaway, he is in a militant state, standing upon the field of battle, surrounded with the armies of hell; and is it to be supposed, that the believer can live in quiet, free of the assaults of the enemy?

3. The experience of the saints of God in all ages confirms this. Christ, the glorious Captain of our salvation, was not

excepted; the prince of this world came upon him with hi craft and cunning; he entered the lists with the powers of hell and earth, and with the corruptions of men; and shall any of his followers expect to be excepted? The ransomed company about the throne, and such as have come out of much tribulation, tribulation from the devil, the world, and their own heart. But I do not stay farther upon this.

V. The *fifth* thing was the *use* of this doctrine and branch of the text, which shall be comprised in the few following inferences.

1. See hence, that this world is not the believer's home or resting-place. If it were, of all men he would be the most miserable: Why? While on this side of time, the enemy will be coming in like a flood upon him. But remember, believer, though thou canst find no rest here, yet "there remains a rest for the people of God." When thou comest to thy own country, thou shalt be beyond the envenomed arrows and fiery darts of Satan; the accuser of the brethren is cast out of that happy land: there thou shalt be beyond the snares and troubles of a wicked world; "there the wicked cease to trouble, and there the weary are at rest. There is no more sea," Rev. xxi. 1. There thou shalt not be molested with the workings of indwelling sin, but "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy."

2. See hence whence it is the believer frequently expresseth such longing desire to be away, crying, When will "the day break, and the shadows flee away," and the happy morning of immediate vision dawn? Why, it is little wonder, considering that, while here, the enemy is breaking in upon him, like a flood; whereas, if once death, the last enemy, has dislodged thy soul from the clay-tabernacle of the body, thy warfare is at an everlasting end; thou shalt have a victorious palm put in thy hand, a victorious diadem put on thy head, and a victorious song put in thy mouth. Hence Paul, when he saw the battle near to an end, cries, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

3. See hence the need that we have of Christ in his kingly office, to subdue, restrain, and conquer all his and our enemies. Sirs, none of Christ's offices can be wanting. We need him as a prophet, to open the mysteries of the kingdom, and to open our understanding to know them; we need him as a priest, to justify us, and to make reconciliation for ini-

quity, by his atoning blood and prevalent intercession; and we need him also as a king, to break up the way before us, to go upon our head, to fight our battles against the armies of the aliens that we have to engage with in our way to glory; he has his name written upon his thigh and vesture, "King of kings, and Lord of lords;" and the armies which are in heaven follow him, even the armies of saints in the church-militant, they follow him; and it is under his conduct we are made conquerors, yea, more than conquerors.

4. See hence encouragement to poor tossed and tempted believers, who are combating with the enemy coming in like a flood upon them, wrestling with flesh and blood, principalities and powers, and perhaps are ready to faint and give over, saying with David, "One day or other I shall fall by the hand of the enemy;" some day or other the strong floods of temptation and corruption will carry me clean away, and I shall be a scandal to religion, and make the name of God to be blasphemed. But, believer, I have good news to tell thee; though the enemy come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Many a fiery dart dipt in hell does now fly about thee; but be of good cheer, the victory is sure, for the Captain of thy salvation has said, that "he will tread Satan under your feet shortly." Many a weary day hast thou with the workings of indwelling sin, crying, "Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me!" but be of good cheer, the victorious General has "finished transgression and made an end of sin:" he has said, that "sin shall not have dominion, *and that* grace shall reign." Many a heavy cross and trial does the world roll upon thy back, perhaps trials in thy person, in thy family, in thy relations, in thy name, in thy worldly estate; but be of good courage, "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted, behold the Lord is laying thy stones with fair colours, and thy foundations with sapphires." Perhaps thou would give all the world to be rid of some predominant lust, some sin that easily besets thee; well, be comforted, the Spirit of the Lord has said, that he "will subdue your iniquities, *that* your old man is crucified with him." Perhaps thou art racked with an evil heart of unbelief, and crying, "Lord, help mine unbelief:" well, here is comfort, the Author and Finisher of faith will "fulfil in you all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power."

O say you, these are good news indeed, that victory is secured; but how is it secured? *Answ.* It is ensured by God's ordination and appointment: Luke xxii. 28, 29. "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations: and I appoint unto you a kingdom." It is ensured by covenant

and promise, that thou shalt go from strength to strength, till thou appear before the Lord in Zion; "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength: they shall mount up with wings as eagles." It is ensured by the blood of a Redeemer; he has bought thy freedom from sin and Satan, and he will not leave the purchase of his blood in the hand of the enemy: Christ's victory secures thine; he overcame as a public person, in the name of his whole mystical body, and thou mayest warrantably take up the spoils of his victory, saying, "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." The intercession of Christ in heaven secures the victory; if he hath any interest, he will employ it in the behalf of his friends grappling with his enemies: Satan seeks to winnow you; but he prays for thee, that thy faith fail not. The hand of Moses fell and fagged when Israel was engaged with Amalek;—but the hand of the man of God's right hand never falls down, and therefore the true Israel of God shall prevail. Thy relation to Christ obliges him to take care that thou be not taken away with the flood. He is thy Bridegroom, and will the Bridegroom suffer his bride to be trampled upon, if he can help it? He is thy Head, and will not the Head see to the safety of the members? He is the Captain of thy salvation, and he will see to the welfare of his soldiers.

Object. I am indeed persuaded, that all who belong to Christ, shall be secured against the enemy, though he come in like a flood; but, alas! that is still my fear, and the great question with me is, whether I belong to him? Well, to put this matter out of question, I only ask two or three questions. (1.) Hast thou not proclaimed and commenced war against all known sin; and are you not resolved, through grace, to "resist even to blood, striving against sin?" If so, though the enemy may come in like a flood, the spirit of the Lord will drive him back, and thou shalt be victorious at last. (2.) When the enemy comes in, and prevails at any time like a flood, dost not thou wrestle and strive against the stream, saying, "Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me;" I am led captive by the law of sin and death? This says thou art on the Lord's side. A dead fish goes down the stream, but a living fish bears up against it, though it be borne down by violence. (3.) When the enemy comes in like a flood, Is not Christ thy great [object,] and does not a look of him lighten thy heart, and inspire thee with fresh courage against the enemy? Psal. xxxiv. 5: "They looked unto him, and were lightened." (4.) Art thou not now and then longing to be with the triumphant company above, where there is no more sea, no tempting devil, or deceitful heart? And art thou not

lightened, to think that ere long the battle will be at an end? This says that it shall be according to thy wish, for "he will satisfy the longing soul:" and Christ in heaven is longing as much for thy company, as thou art for his: "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am."

The *last* use is, in a word of *Exhortation.* Is it so that the believer, while in this world, must lay his account to have the enemy coming in like a flood upon him? Then, believer, put on thy harness, and be like the valiant of king Solomon, who have their sword girded upon their thigh, for fear of the night. Fight the good fight of faith, make a stout and valiant stand against the enemy.

Motive 1. Thy enemies are God's enemies, as well as thine. The devil is his enemy, for he sinned from the beginning; the world is his enemy, for the friendship of it is enmity to God; sin is his enemy, it is the abominable thing that his soul hates. Now all God's enemies "shall perish, they shall consume into smoke." Shall they consume away, and may not this hearten thee in thy passage? especially considering,

2. That the Lord of hosts is with thee, God is upon thy side; his name *Emmanuel* signifies *God with us,* God to espouse our quarrel, God to bruise the serpent's head, God with us to "finish transgression, and make an end of sin," God with us to overcome the world. "Fear thou not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God," Is. xli. 10. And therefore triumph with the church, and say, (Psal. xlvi. at the beginning,) "God is our refuge and our strength: The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge; therefore will we not be afraid."

3. The enemy is already defeated, and baffled by thy glorious Head and General; thou hast only a shattered enemy to grapple with: Psal. lxxiv. 14, the children of Israel, there speaking of the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the Red sea, sing this song: "Thou breakest the heads of leviathan in pieces, and gavest him to be meat to the people inhabiting the wilderness." The meaning is, that the overthrow of Pharaoh and his host in the sea, was a sweet encouraging meal to Israel, in their travels through the wilderness to the heavenly Canaan, and was a pledge of their victory over all their other enemies. So, here, Christ's victory over sin, death, and hell, is a sweet meal to the believer in the wilderness of this world, and is a sure pledge that, ere long, he shall tread them under his feet.

4. Know, for thy encouragement, there are many triumphing in glory, against whom the floods did run with as great violence, as they do now against thee. The cloud of

witnesses, Heb. xi. and the innumerable company, Rev. vii. their battle was as hot as thine; but now they are triumphing in glory, in white robes. Take courage, "follow them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises."

5. The battle will soon be over, the time is short, "the end of all things is at hand," and within a little thy glorious General will sound the retreat, and call thee off the field. There is a solemn triumph promised to the overcomer, Rev. ii. 7:— Again, know, for thy encouragement, thy General will bear thy charges in the war; for "he sends none a warfare on their own charges." "Thy God commands thy strength;" he himself is "the strength of Israel, the glory of their strength;" he will "make thy bow to abide in its strength, and the arms of thy hand shall be made strong by the mighty God of Jacob:" "Out of his fulness thou shalt receive grace for grace." Again, consider, there is no discharging of this warfare against the enemy that comes in like a flood; thou must either fight or die in the quarrel; thou must either fight, or be a slave; thou must either fight, or fall under the curse of God. "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

Lastly, The word of command is given by the glorious General, "Fight the good fight of faith, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong." Will the soldier draw back, when the General gives the word? Let none of Christ's soldiers draw back the hand; not to obey, is death by the marshal-law of heaven.

I conclude with the few advices following:—

1. Break your league with hell, sin, and death; if ye be in a confederacy with any known sin, you cannot strike a fair stroke in the Lord's quarrel.

2. Set up your standard of war against the enemy, in the name of JEHOVAH, a reconciled God in Christ, saying with the church, "We will be joyful in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners;" and with David, Psal. cxviii. "They compassed me about like bees; but in the name of the Lord I will destroy them."

3. Take care of the enemy within doors, observe its motions, I mean the evil heart of unbelief; for if you do not, it will betray you. "Keep your heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life. Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries," &c.

4. Keep in with God and conscience: a good God, and a good conscience, on a man's side, will make him bold as a lion. "This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom,

but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world."

5. Make much use of the Christian's armour, recommended, Eph. vi. 11. As,

1*st*, The shield of faith. No fighting, no standing before the enemy without faith. God's worthies, Heb. xi. "by faith turned to flight the armies of the aliens."

2*dly*, Put on the helmet of salvation, a well-grounded hope of glory; this, like a helmet, will keep the head safe, when showers of darts are flying about you.

3*dly*, Get on the girdle of truth. The truth and faithfulness of God in his word, improved by faith, is like a girdle by which the loins are made firm and strong in the day of battle. It is by the word of truth we are commanded to "strengthen the weak hands, and to confirm the feeble knees."

4*thly*, Put on the breast-plate of righteousness. By which we may either understand imputed righteousness, apprehended by faith, which like a breast-plate fortifies the heart, and imboldens the believer against all accusers and all accusations, and enables him to say, "Who can lay any thing to my charge?" Or it may be understood of implanted righteousness and holiness, uprightness and integrity of heart and life, which, as I said, makes a man bold as a lion.

5*thly*, Make use of the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, both to offend the enemy, and defend yourself. With this weapon Christ encountered and overthrew the enemy in the wilderness, "Thus and thus it is written." With the same weapon all his soldiers are to fight.

Lastly, Be much in prayer, wrestling with God upon your knees, calling for grace and mercy to help in time of need. Thus Jacob like a prince prevailed; "by his strength he had power with God, he had power with the angel, and prevailed; for he wept and made supplication unto him."

THE STANDARD OF HEAVEN LIFTED UP AGAINST THE POWERS OF HELL, AND THEIR AUXILIARIES.*

The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.—Isa. lix. 19.

THE *second* doctrine I observed from the words was this, *That it is the Spirit of the Lord that lifts up a standard, and drives back the enemy, when coming like a flood.*

In discoursing upon this doctrine, I shall,

I. Speak a little of the standard-bearer, the Spirit of the Lord.

II. Of the standard which he lifts up.

III. Of the lifting up of this blessed standard.

IV. Show how it is, or whence it is, the lifting up of the standard gives a repulse to the enemy, or drives him back, when coming like a flood.

V. *Lastly*, Apply the whole.

I. For the *first*, which is, to *speak a little of the standard-bearer, the Spirit of the Lord.* Where two things may be inquired into. 1. What Lord is he that is here intended? 2. Whom are we to understand by the Spirit of the Lord?

Quest. 1. What Lord is he that is here intended?

I answer, 1. He is, "the Lord of hosts, the Lord mighty in battle," Psal. xxiv.: "he *that* does in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, what pleaseth him; the Lord who stretcheth out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth, before whom the inhabitants of the world are as *a company of* grasshoppers."

2. He is *the Lord of glory*, that is here intended, 1 Cor. ii. 8: "Had they known him, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory;" "the brightness of the Father's glory," "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders." When the cherubims and seraphims behold him upon his throne high and lifted up, they cry, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory."

3. He is *the Lord of life*, Acts iii. 15: "Ye have killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead." "As

* Preached Sabbath evening, at Burntisland, July 4, 1730.

the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." He has life in himself essentially and originally as the Father, he being the "true God, and eternal life;" and as Mediator, he has a life given him by the Father, by virtue of which he is the fountain of life to his mystical body, "the resurrection and the life."

4. He is *the Lord of lords*, Rev. xix. 16: "He hath on his vesture, and on his thigh, a name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS." All the powers of the earth are the vassals of this great Lord, they hold their crowns and sceptres of him. He casts the mighty out of his seat, and raiseth them of low degree.

Quest. 2. Whom are we to understand by the Spirit of the Lord? Take an answer to this in the following particulars:—

1. The Spirit of the Lord, as to his essence, is the same God, with the Father and the Son. There is but one God, and 'three persons in the Godhead, the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; and these three are one God, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.' We are not to imagine any superiority or inferiority among the persons of the Godhead, seeing they are one and the same most simple and undivided being.

2. As to the order of his existence, according to the revelation of the word, he is the third person of the adorable Trinity, and proceeds from the Father and the Son, in an ineffable and inconceivable manner. All that we have revealed concerning the manner of the existence of these three divine persons of the Godhead, is, that the Father begat the Son, the Son is begotten of the Father, and the Holy Ghost proceedeth from the Father and the Son: but as to the generation of the Son, or the procession of the Holy Ghost, who can declare it? God has drawn a veil over it, and it is dangerous for us, in this state of mortality, curiously to pry into this mystery; and they who have adventured to go farther than the revelation of the word leads them, have always run themselves into the bogs of Arian, Sabellian, or Socinian errors.

3. As to his office in the great work of salvation, he applies to us the redemption purchased by Christ; in order to which he receives the things of Christ, that he may show them to us. All the blessings of a Redeemer's purchase, all the goods of his testament, both heritable and moveable, the whole estate of eternal life, and every thing that pertains to it, are lodged in his hand, that he may, according to his commission from the Father and Son, apply them, and make them effectual to the heirs of promise. And according to the

various parts of his work, in applying the purchased salvation, he gets several names in scripture; as,

1*st*, He is sometimes called a *reprover:* John xvi. 8: "When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin." And his reproofs are so sharp and piercing, that they are compared to keen arrows, and a sharp "two-edged sword, piercing to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit."

2*dly*, He is sometimes called a *comforter:* "I will send the Comforter, and he shall teach you all things." He is so called, because he "comforts them that mourn in Zion;" he gives "the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for the spirit of heaviness." His consolations are so strong that they make the lips of them that are asleep to sing.

3*dly*, He is sometimes called an *advocate;* the word rendered a *comforter*, signifies also an *advocate*. He pleads the cause of Christ in the world, against all that dare to speak against him; he pleads his cause in the hearts of his people, against all the false surmises that Satan and an unbelieving heart are ready to suggest to his prejudice; and he acts the part of an advocate, by enabling us to plead and "pray with groans which cannot be uttered."

4*thly*, He is sometimes called a *witness:* John xv. 26: "He shall testify of me." The Spirit bears witness of Christ, partly by external revelation, partly by internal manifestation; hence called "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ." He bears witness of the sonship of believers; he "bears witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God:" he is in them a "spirit of adoption, enabling them to cry, *Abba, Father.*"

5*thly*, He is sometimes called a *remembrancer:* John xiv. 26: "He shall bring to your remembrance whatsoever I have spoken unto you." Our memories are like leaking vessels, let all the good words of Christ slip from us; but the Spirit will not let them slip; no, he keeps them for our use, and brings to remembrance with a fresh relish and savour in time of need; and in that case the believer finds such a sweetness in the word, that he cannot but say with Jeremiah, "Thy words were found by me, and I did eat them, and they were unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

6*thly*, He is sometimes called a *teacher:* "He shall teach you all things," John xiv. 26. He teaches so, as no man ever taught; he is "an interpreter among a thousand;" all the commentaries in the world are not able to give such a view of a word of scripture, as the Spirit of the Lord will do, when he opens it up in his own light; he makes the heart of the rash to understand wisdom.

7*thly*, He is sometimes called a *guide:* "When the Spirit

of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth."' He saves the members of Christ from such damnable errors, as strike at the foundation of religion and Christianity; none of his teaching shall be given up to strong delusions, to believe lies.

4. The Spirit of the Lord, as to his qualities or properties, we are told in scripture, is,

1*st*, A *renewing Spirit:* hence we read of "the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." All the powers of the soul, and the image of God in them, are dislocated and defaced, the whole "foundations are out of course;" but the Spirit of the Lord, in the work of regeneration, repairs the image of God, and sets every thing again in its proper place and order.

2*dly*, He is a *sanctifying Spirit*, therefore called "the Spirit of holiness." He draws the lineaments of the divine holiness upon us, and 'enables us more and more to die unto sin, and to live unto righteousness:' he takes the beauty of Christ and puts it upon us, whereby we are made comely.

3*dly*, He is a *Spirit of glory:* "The Spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you," says the apostle Peter. He makes "the King's daughter all glorious within," and so fits the soul for being brought to glory, "makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

4*thly*, He is a *Spirit of power;* "he giveth power to the faint,—makes the feeble as David." When the Spirit of the Lord was with Samson, he slew the Philistines heaps upon heaps; but when the Lord departed, the locks in which his strength lay were cut.

5*thly*, He is a *Spirit of love.* Wherever he comes, he makes the heart to burn with love to God in Christ, so that the soul cannot but say, with David, "Whom have I in heaven but thee?" The man loves his ordinances, and the place where his honour dwells: he loves his people, and all that bear his image: "My delight is with the saints, the excellent ones of the earth."

6*thly*, He is a *Spirit of a sound mind*, for he gives a sound judgment and understanding of the things of God; hence it is, that one of the Lord's babes or little ones will have a more clear and sound uptaking of the things of God, than all the learned rabbies and plodding politicians in the world, that excel in human wisdom and literature.

I shall only add, 5. That the actings and operations of the Spirit of the Lord are set forth to us in scripture under different metaphors; as,

1*st*, He is sometimes resembled to *fire*, therefore called a *Spirit of burning*, Is. iv. 4. He consumes and burns up the

dross of sin and corruption. As the sparks of fire fly upward, so he makes the soul to seek those things that are above.

2*dly*, He is sometimes resembled to *water:* Isa. xliv. 3: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground." By his influences, the soul is so fructified, that it becomes as a tree planted by the rivers of waters, bringing forth fruit in season: "I will be as the dew unto Israel, and he shall grow as the lily."

3*dly*, He is sometimes resembled to *wind:* Cant. iv. 16: "Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, blow upon my garden." John iii. 8: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." When this wind fills the sails of the affections, with what speed and liveliness does the believer move in his voyage to the haven of glory, his everlasting rest!

4*thly*, He is sometimes resembled in his operations to *oil:* "We have an unction from the holy One, and we know all things." We read of the anointing of the Spirit; "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." And by this oil the countenance of the believer is made to shine, the joints of his soul are suppled, so that he runs and does not weary, walks and does not faint.

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to *speak a little of the standard which is lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord.* By the standard, as I told you in the explication of the words, I understand Christ the blessed ensign, which is lifted to the nations, Is. xi. 10: And he is fitly resembled to a standard, on the following accounts.

1. The standard is a signal of war; when war is proclaimed, the standard is set up, or the ensign displayed. When Christ descended to this lower world, and came upon an expedition of war against the god of this world, and his usurped empire over the children of men, this war was proclaimed, and the standard set up in Paradise, by that word, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." Accordingly, when he actually came into the world, he gave a shout of war against the enemy, saying, "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Hence it was, that hell and its auxiliaries took the alarm, they *raged*, they "imagined a vain thing against the Lord, and against his anointed, saying, Come, let us break their bands asunder, and cast away their cords from us:" but the man of God's right hand wounded his head over many nations, breaks him, and his adherents, as with a rod of iron. The incarnation of the Son of God was a sig-

nal to a lost world that God was now with us, to deliver us from the power of Satan; his appearing in our flesh, was a displaying the standard, or a lifting up the banner, that we might gather to him as our leader and commander.

2. A standard is a signal of peace; when peace is proclaimed, the white flag or ensign is displayed. As the appearance of God in the nature of man was a signal of war against hell, death and sin; so it was a signal of peace to man upon earth: hence the angels, at the birth of our Redeemer, cry, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men." He is our peace: "This man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land." He brought with him a peace of reconciliation with God, a peace of consolation with conscience, a peace of amity and friendship between man and man, and between man and his fellow-creatures.

3. A standard is an ensign of victory; the victorious general sets up his standard in the field of battle, as an evidence of the enemy's being foiled. So a risen and living Redeemer, is a signal of his victory over the powers of hell; for "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive," he returned from the field with displayed ensigns, carrying the spoils of his enemies along with him; upon the sight of which the church cries, in a way of triumph, Psal. lxviii. 20: "He that is our God, is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord belong the issues from death."

4. A standard is a signal of gathering; when the standard is set up, the army is to gather, volunteers are to be listed. The manifestation of Christ in the flesh, and the revelation of him in the gospel, is a signal to lost sinners, to shake off the tyrannical yoke of sin and Satan, that they may, under Christ's conduct, recover their ancient liberty that they enjoyed at their creation: hence is that prophecy of Jacob, Gen. xlix. 10: "Unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Is. xi. 10: "He shall be set for an ensign to the nation; to him shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." And O how glad is he when volunteers come in as flocks of doves to their windows! Matth. xxiii. at the close, "How often would I have gathered thee, as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!"

5. A standard is for direction and order. When the army is to march, the standard goes before, and the soldiers know in what direction to move by the motion of their standard. Christ is given for a leader to the people; it is by eyeing of him the saints know how to direct, and to bend their course in their travels through the wilderness. Hence the apostle exhorts believers to "run their race with patience, looking

unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of their faith," Heb. xii. 1, 2. Thus, you see, that Christ is the standard, and why so called.

III. The *third* thing was, to *speak a little of the lifting up of this blessed standard.*

1. The first uplifting of it was in the eternal counsel of Heaven, before ever the foundation of the world was laid: Prov. viii. 23: "I was set up," says Christ, "from everlasting, from beginning, or ever the earth was." From all eternity, God had a purpose of love towards lost sinners of Adam's family, and a purpose of war against the powers of hell, by Jesus Christ.

2. This standard was lifted up in the first promise, Gen. iii. 15: "It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;" that is, My eternal Son, in the nature of man, shall, in the fulness of time, avenge the quarrel of the woman and her seed, in thy total ruin and overthrow.

3. This standard was set up in the actual incarnation, obedience, and death of the Son of God; for then it was that "through death he destroyed him that had the power of death;" then it was he destroyed the works of the devil, turned the counsel of that froward spirit headlong, outshot him in his own bow. The devil and the world thought that they had Christ undermost, when they had brought him to the dust of death; but our glorious Emmanuel wrests death out of the devil's hand, and slays him with his own weapons.

4. This standard was lifted up by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and his exaltation at the right hand of the Majesty on high. We are told, Psal. cx. 7, that "having drunk of the brook in the way, he lifted up the head:" and by his uplifting, he draws all men after him. O, sirs, lift up your eyes to heaven, and behold this royal standard now set up in Emmanuel's land, "far above all principality and power, might and dominion." "God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name above every name."

5. This standard is lifted up in the dispensation of the everlasting gospel, which began first to be preached by the apostles immediately after his resurrection, and afterward by other ministers called of God for that end, which are to continue in a succession to the end of the world. O how successfully was this standard lifted up by the apostles, when set up immediately after his exaltation, when whole thousands, by the preaching of a sermon concerning the death and resurrection of Christ, were brought into the service of Christ; when whole nations were born to him at once; when heathenish idolatry fell down before the everlasting gospel; by which was fulfilled that prophecy of Isaiah, chap.

lx. 8: "Who are these that fly as a cloud, and as the doves to their windows?"

6. Again, when there is any remarkable appearance for Christ and his cause, in a church or nation, in opposition to error, superstition, profaneness, or any of the works of the devil; when the Lord inspirits his ministers, and the judicatories of his church, to give a fair, full, and faithful testimony for Christ, in opposition to any of these works of darkness; then is it that this standard is lifted up. What a pity is it that there should be such a faint display of Christ's banner against that damning heresy of Arianism, vented of late in this church! It is to be feared, we shall never be honoured to do any signal service for Christ, when such an opportunity of doing him justice has been slighted; however, he will give the banner to them that fear him, that it may be displayed because of truth."

7. When God in his providence breaks and baffles wicked and blood-thirsty persecutors, who were making havoc of his church and people, granting them respite and deliverance from trouble; then is it that this standard is lifted up, when he raises up saviours in mount Zion, to judge the mount of Esau. How remarkably was this standard lifted up for Israel, when Pharaoh and his host, in their pursuit, were overthrown in the Red sea, and made "to sink like lead in the mighty waters!" or when, by his servant Cyrus, he overthrew the power of Babylon, and brought back his people again to their native land? on which occasion, Israel could not but say, "When the Lord brought back the captivity of his people, we were like men that dreamed." Thus, God lifted up the standard in our land, when in his providence he raised up the Prince of Orange, as the instrument of our deliverance, when we were upon the point of being swallowed up with a deluge of popish darkness and tyranny.

8. This royal standard is lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord in the morning of conversion, when through discoveries of the glory of Christ, the soul is determined to make a surrender of itself, and to lift up the everlasting doors, that this King of glory may come in. And O, when he comes in, how remarkably does he drive back the enemy! he binds the strong man, spoils him of his goods; translates the poor soul from the power of darkness to his own kingdom of light, life, and liberty.

9. The Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard in every renewed manifestation and discovery of the glory of Christ, especially after a dark night of desertion, temptation, and despondency. Perhaps the poor believer was "going mourning without the sun;" the wild beasts of hell, the roaring lion,

and his emissaries, were like to devour him, and the poor believer crying, "I am cast out of thy sight: My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God." However, at length the Spirit of light, life, and power comes, and by a discovery of the glory of Christ, forces a day upon the poor creature, that was walking in darkness and saw no light." O then the Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard, and Satan is baffled, his fiery darts are blunted, the mourning of the poor soul is turned to singing and triumph. Thus, you see when it is that the Spirit of the Lord may be said to lift up his standard against the enemy coming in like a flood.

IV. The *fourth* thing was, *to inquire whence is it that the lifting up of the standard, or the displaying of the glory of Christ by the Spirit of the Lord, gives a repulse to the enemy, or drives him back.*

I answer, 1. The displaying of the glory of Christ by the Spirit of the Lord, sets faith in a lively exercise, which is the great engine by which we are enabled to overcome Satan, the world, and all our enemies. As for Satan and his fiery darts, they are quenched by faith, Eph. vi. 16, and Rev. xii. 11: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb;" that is, by faith acting upon a glorious Redeemer and his atoning blood. As for the world, it is by faith that we trample upon its frowns and flatteries: "This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith." As for indwelling sin, atheism, enmity, pride, carnality, and the like, every view of Christ by faith gives a new wound, and cuts off some limb or member of the old man of sin: Acts xv. 9; the saints are there said to "purify their hearts by faith." By faith "we behold the glory of the Lord," and so "are changed into the same image, from glory to glory;" and thus gradually the body of sin and death is wasted and weakened.

2. By displays of the glory of Christ, love is inflamed. And where the love of Christ is shed abroad in the heart by the Spirit of the Lord, the utmost assaults of hell are not able to prevail: "Many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." When love is in exercise, the soul hates evil, and is ready to cry out, "Depart from me, all ye evil doers; for I will keep the commandments of my God." What but the love of God made Joseph to give such a repulse to the hellish attack made upon him by his adulterous mistress, "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" See the influence of the love of Christ in the triumph of the apostle, Rom. viii. at the close: "Who

shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation or distress," &c.

3. Displays of the glory of Christ inspire the soul with courage and strength to oppose the enemy, when he comes in like a flood. By the sight of the great Captain of salvation, the believer becomes bold as a lion, to encounter the powers of hell and corruption. O! says the believer, when he gets a sight of Christ, "Through him assisting me I can do all things." Psal. xxxiv. 5: "They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed."

4. Displays of the glory of Christ, by the word and Spirit of the Lord, dispirit the enemy, though coming in like a flood. The devil and his auxiliaries know very well, to their sad experience, that Christ is match and more for them; the head of the serpent bears the marks of Christ's heel, his wound shall never be healed. And, therefore, whenever Christ takes the field, to espouse the cause of the poor soul oppressed by the enemy, immediately he loses heart, and gives way: hence is that prayer of David, Psal. lxviii. 1, 2; "Let God arise, let his enemies be scattered: let them also that hate him, flee before him," &c.

V. The *fifth* thing was the *Application*. And the *first* use may be of *Information*, in a few particulars. Is it so that when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him? then,

1. See hence what it is that makes a church "terrible as an army with banners," to the powers of hell, and the wicked of the world. It is not carnal wisdom and policy; it is not a yielding to the humours of men in the matters of Christ; it is not a squaring our conduct according to the wisdom of this world: no, it is the presence of the Spirit of the Lord, and by following the standard of the word, which he has given for "a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our paths." How terrible was the church of Scotland in the days of our reformation, when the Spirit of the Lord rested upon our worthy reformers, enabling them to "contend earnestly for the faith," and for the royal prerogatives of the King of Zion, in opposition to papists, the malignants, and other enemies of a covenanted reformation? A faithful minister, and his interest with God, by the confession of the queen of Scotland, was at that time more terrible and dreadful to her, than an army of ten thousand men. But, alas! the Spirit of the Lord is departed in a great measure, and a worldly, politic, carnal, selfish, party-spirit is come in its room, which cannot miss but make us base and contemptible both in the eyes of friends and foes.

2. See from this doctrine the ground and cause of all our defections and backslidings at this day; why, the Spirit of the Lord, who lifts up the standard, is departed hence, the enemy comes in like a flood. We have grieved the Spirit, quenched the Spirit, resisted the Spirit; and hence it is that he does not lift up a standard against the floods of error, profanity, tyranny, and oppression, that are broken in upon us. If you ask, In what way have we grieved the Spirit, and provoked him to depart from us? I answer, It is by our not regarding or following the standard, when lifted up in the dispensation of the glorious gospel. When Christ is not received; when the precepts and promises of the word are not believed or regarded; when magistrates, ministers, or people, do not in their several stations show a regard to the convictions of the Spirit, or his motions on their hearts; this grieves him, and provokes him to depart from a church, or a particular person.

3. See hence what it is that makes the gospel successful among a people, for destroying Satan's kingdom, and pulling down his strong-holds; it is the Spirit of the Lord, accompanying the preaching of the word, and displaying the glory of Christ in it. However contemptible the gospel may appear to a blind world, who look on it only with the eye of carnal reason; yet to them that believe, it will be found to be "the wisdom of God, and the power of God unto salvation:" "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds." It is not the flourish of words, it is not the force of human rhetoric, or flaunting harangues of morality, that will ever serve the turn: no, it is a faithful display of the glory of Christ, a simple proposal of the gospel, an opening of the mysteries of the kingdom. This is the chariot in which the Spirit of God rides; and O, when he rides in his own chariot, he rides prosperously, and the people fall under him.

4. See hence what it is that makes the ordinances of the gospel so sweet and desirable to a gracious soul, insomuch that "one day in his courts is better than a thousand." What makes preaching sweet, or a communion-table so desirable to the saints? Why, there they find the Spirit of the Lord lifting up the standard, displaying the glory, fulness, suitableness, and excellency of Christ and his love: Cant ii. 3, 4: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. He brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love." In gospel ordinances, believers are privileged with discoveries of the love and loveliness of a glorious Redeemer; hence is that of David, Psal. xxvii. 4: "One thing have I desired of the

Lord, that will I seek after, that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple."

5. See hence what it is that inspirits a believer to hold on his way, even though death and hell, the devil and the world, stand in his way; why, "the Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard;" and you know, as the army is heartened to keep and stand their ground by the sight of the standard, so are believers heartened by displays of the glory of Christ: "They shall sing in the ways of the Lord: for great is the glory of the Lord." Let a believer but see Christ in his glory, he is able to look the law, justice, conscience, and the world in the face, and say, "Who can lay any thing to my charge?" Then it is that he "rides upon his high places;" being "clothed with the sun, he treads the moon" of this world "under his feet:" then is he able to encounter death, the king of terrors, in his most formidable aspect; and to say with Paul, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus."

6. See hence whence it comes that we shall frequently find such surprising turns in the case or exercise of the Lord's people. Sometimes the believer is at such a low ebb, that he is giving up the day for lost, quitting the field, yielding the cause to the enemy, as if all were lost, like David, "One day or other I shall fall by the hand of the enemy;" the armies of hell, and swarms of corruptions, are too strong for me: but all on a sudden recovers his spirit, girds himself with gladness, puts on his harness, triumphing in his high places, giving a bold defiance to hell and all its emissaries, saying with David, Psal. iii. 5, 6: "I laid me down and slept; I awaked, for the Lord sustained me. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of people, that set themselves against me round about." Whence comes this sudden change and alteration with the believer? The matter is this: when the enemy was coming in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord lifted up a standard against him; and the very sight of the standard, an uptaking of the glory of Christ, puts new spirits and life in him; so that he goes forth, "like a giant refreshed with new wine," to the field of battle.

7. See hence what is the most expeditious and effectual method to mortify the deeds of the body of sin, or to put a check upon the insurrections of enmity, unbelief, pride, vanity of spirit, and other heart-evils, which, like the daughters of Heth, make the believer sometimes weary of his life: why, the best way in the world is, to call in the assistance and aid of the Spirit of the Lord, that he may lift up a standard against him. No sooner does the Spirit of the Lord take

the field, and begin to testify of Christ, or to manifest his glory to the soul, but these locusts of hell shrink, and hide their heads. The wild beasts of the forest, which range through the fields in the darkness of the night, retire to their dens whenever the sun arises: so, whenever the Sun of Righteousness arises upon the soul, these enemies flee before him. A display of the glory of Christ will break the strength of the most violent temptation, and knock down the strongest and most turbulent lusts; these enemies are not able to behold the standard lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord. And therefore, poor believer, whenever thou art like to be worsted by any of thy spiritual enemies, call in the aid of the Spirit, that he may drive them back: "For we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body."

8. See hence when we may look for a work of reformation to be revived in the land. It is matter of sad exercise to many of the Lord's people at this day, to think how far we are carried down the stream and tide of error, profanity, and defection; and they are ready to say, "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small:" when will a work of reformation be revived from under the rubbish? Why, here is an answer to this melancholy question: These things will be done, when the Spirit shall be poured out from on high; when the Spirit of the Lord *shall* lift up a standard, then shall the enemy be driven back, though he hath come in like a flood. And it may be matter of comfort to the mourners of our Zion, who are sighing and crying for all the abominations done in the midst of us, that this promise in my text is positive and absolute: "When the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him." And therefore, if we would get the better either of the evils of our own heart, or of the evils of our day or generation, let us take the promise and believe it, and plead it; for "God is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent." Let us put him to his word, and give him no rest till he do as he has said. This is the course he directs us to take when we would have the Spirit, or any promised good of the covenant conferred upon us, Ezek. xxxvi. 37: "I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, that I may do it for them."

THE STANDARD OF HEAVEN LIFTED UP AGAINST THE POWERS OF HELL, AND THEIR AUXILIARIES.*

The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.—Isa. lix. 19.

I PROCEED now to a *second* use of this doctrine, which shall be by way of *Trial.* There is not a soul hearing me, but is either under the standard of Heaven or of hell; for between these two standards the whole world is divided; there is no middle state, no neutral. In this combat, either you are waging war with Heaven, under the standard of "the prince of the power of the air;" or else you have deserted the devil's colours, under which you were born, and turned in under the standard of Heaven, lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord. I suppose there are few hearing me, but profess to be under the standard of Heaven; your name as Christians says so much; your attendance upon the ordinances of divine appointment, is a professed listing yourselves under the banner of Christ. And if not, what is your business here, where Christ's volunteers attend his colours? And in a special manner, you who have been at a communion-table, and have gotten the sacrament, you have come under the military oath; you have sworn to cleave to the standard of Christ, in opposition to all his and your enemies, by laying your hands on the body and blood of the Son of God. But, sirs, allow me to tell you, there are many who go out professedly under Christ's colours, who yet are heart-friends to his enemies, and who never yet broke their covenant with hell, and their agreement with death; and, therefore, this matter wants to be a little farther tried, whether you be really under Christ's standard, or under the standard of the enemy. I told you, in the explication of these words, that the standard lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord, by which the enemy is beaten back, is just Christ himself, and the displays of his glory in the light of his word and Spirit; and therefore the grand question comes to this: Whether the Spirit of the Lord has ever manifested Christ to you, and, by the discoveries of his glory, has killed the power of sin in your soul, and so driven back the enemy that was coming in like a flood?

* Preached at Orwell Sacrament, last Sabbath of July, 1730.

For clearing of this matter, take the following marks:—

1. If ever the Spirit of the Lord lifted up the standard effectually over you, he has laid siege to thy heart, and the strong-holds of iniquity have been battered and shaken by the thundering ordnance of the law. Ordinarily, before the Spirit of the Lord lift up the standard of peace, he displays the standard of war in and against the soul, by which it is roused and awakened out of the lethargy of carnal peace and security; the lying refuges, in which the man was trusting, are shaken and overturned. By nature the strong man of sin keeps the house; for Satan, the god of this world, "while he keeps the house, the goods are at ease," and the man is carried away with the flood in a pleasant dream, "crying, Peace, peace," while sudden destruction is at the door. But, I say, ordinarily the Spirit of the Lord comes as "a Spirit of bondage unto fear;" taking some of the thunderbolts from mount Sinai, he darts them in upon the heart, by which the sinner's carnal peace is broken and disturbed, the high imaginations of a righteousness by the law, and of peace with God upon that footing, are cast to the ground. This we see exemplified in the apostle Paul, he "was alive without the law; but when the commandment came," when the law was set home in its spirituality, "sin revived," says he, "and I died;" as if he had said, All my vain confidences of righteousness by the law fell down; I found myself stripped of my fig-leaf coverings. Try by this,—Has the Spirit of the Lord shut you up to the faith; straitened you so with law-terrors, that you saw no relief in heaven or in earth, but by fleeing to Christ, who is the last refuge that ever a guilty sinner will run to?

2. If ever the Spirit of the Lord effectually lifted up the standard, so to drive back the enemy, the "everlasting doors" have opened at his summons, and there has been a surrender of the heart and soul to the Lord. Have you been made to lie down at the foot of adorable sovereignty, like a poor supplicant, crying with Paul, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" or with the jailer, "What shall I do to be saved?" Lord, will the soul say, I put a blank in thy hand; I am content to fall in with any method of salvation that thou wilt prescribe. I have hitherto been building castles in the air, expecting salvation in a way of my own devising; but I find the bed too short for me to stretch myself upon, the covering too narrow to wrap my naked soul in. I see myself upon the point of everlasting ruin, and of falling an eternal sacrifice to avenging justice. O show me a city of refuge. O lead me to the place where thou causest thy flock to rest. O how shall I have peace with God? for I see it is hard for me to

kick against the pricks. There is no prospering, by hardening myself against him; and therefore I yield to his summons, and surrender myself wholly to him, to be saved in the way that he thinks fit.

3. If the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up the standard effectually in thy heart, thy soul has been filled with a silent wondering at the first sight of the standard; I mean, at the first view of the glory and excellency of Christ; so that you could not but own with the spouse, that he *is* indeed "white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand;" or, as in the margin, "the standard-bearer among ten thousand," Cant. v. 10. The name of Christ, Is. ix. 6, would readily ring like sweet melody in thy heart and soul: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and his name shall be called Wonderful." Usually, at the first appearance of Christ to the soul, after it has been wading through the clouds and darkness of mount Sinai, there is something of an ecstasy of admiration seizes the poor creature. He wonders at the person of Christ, when he sees him to be Emmanuel, God-man: "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." He wonders at his love and loveliness; he wonders at the beauty of holiness that shines in him; he wonders at the everlasting righteousness he has brought in; he wonders at the victories that he has won, and at the *redness of his apparel*, Is. lxiii. 1, 2. In a word, the soul wonders at the bright constellation of divine and human excellencies that centre and meet in him. If it be thus with thee, poor soul, it is an evidence that the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up the standard in thy heart.

4. If the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up the standard in and over thee, the iron sinew of thy will has been bended in the day of the Mediator's power: Psal. cx. 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy armies." The language of our hearts by nature is, "We will not have this man to reign over us. As for the word of the Lord that thou hast spoken, we will not do it." But O, whenever the Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard, there is such a sweet irresistible power comes along with the discovery, that the heart, which was like an adamant, is melted like wax in the midst of the bowels; it becomes pliable to the promissory, preceptive, and providential will of God. As for his promissory will, when the Spirit of the Lord lifts up the standard, the soul sweetly yields to that. When God says, "I will be their God, I will be to them a Father, I will take away the heart of stone, I will put my Spirit within them," &c. the soul sweetly falls in with every clause of the covenant, saying amen to every part of it. As for his preceptive will, when the Spirit of the Lord

lifts up the standard, the soul falls in with that also, according to the promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 27: "I will cause them to walk in my statutes, to keep my judgments, and do them." Although the man formerly did cast away God's bands, saying with proud Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?" yet now he is content to have the yoke of Christ's law wreathed about his neck, and written upon the tables of his heart. He has frequently that prayer of David's in his mouth, "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes!—Let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I be not ashamed." As for his providential will, the heart yields to that also, saying, "Here am I, let him do to me as seemeth him good.—The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Under favourable providences he is ready to bless the Lord, saying, "What am I or my father's house, that I am brought hitherto?" Under frowning dispensations he is ready to say, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him.—I was dumb with silence, I opened not my mouth, because thou, Lord, didst it."

5. If the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up the standard in and over thee effectually, thou hast been determined to lift up the standard of war against all Christ's enemies: and the war between thee and them will be, like that between Amalek and Israel, irreconcilable; the war will be turned to a rooted hatred of sin, and all the works thereof; for there can be no agreement between God and Belial, between the works of the Spirit of the Lord, and the works of the prince of the power of the air: Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22: "Do not I hate them, O Lord, that hate thee? And am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred." And whenever Satan or the world would tempt thee to prove false to thy standard, or to yield to their solicitations, thou wilt be ready to start back, and say with Joseph, "How shall I do this great wickedness, and sin against God? Depart from me, all ye evil doers; for I will keep the commandments of my God.

6. For trial, I ask this question, Whether thou hast on the livery of the soldier who fights under the standard which the Spirit of God lifts up? I remember it is said of Christ, the standard-bearer among ten thousand, that he is *white and ruddy*. The same may be said in some respect concerning all that war under his colours; they are *ruddy*, in respect of justification; *white*, in respect of sanctification. (1.) I say, they are *ruddy*, in respect of justification, because Christ's vesture, which was dipped in blood, is upon them, "They have washed their garments in the blood of the Lamb." This

was the best robe that was put upon the prodigal, whenever he entered his father's threshold. So then I ask, Have you put on the red livery of imputed righteousness? has the blood of Christ cleansed you from all sin? The soldiers of Christ submit to the righteousness of Christ. Yea, this is one of the mottos of the standard which you have, Jer. xxiii. 6: "This is his name whereby he shall be called, The Lord our righteousness;" and all the soldiers get their name from this motto and livery. And whenever you fall under challenges for sin, from the law, conscience, justice, or the world, you will find no ease or relief on this side the blood and righteousness of Christ; no healing till the Sun of righteousness arise with it under his wings. (2.) Christ's soldiers, as they are ruddy in respect of justification, so they are *white* in respect of sanctification. I remember we are told, Rev. xix. 14, "that the armies which are in heaven follow the Lamb, riding upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean." And in the day of his armies, his volunteers are said to "shine with the beauty of holiness," Psal. cx. 3. Holiness to the Lord is the motto of the standard, and holiness to the Lord is the beautiful livery with which they are all adorned. This is not to be understood, as if they were perfect in holiness in this life; no, the saints are only "fair like the moon," which has a great many spots: but then, holiness in its perfection is that which every saint is breathing after, saying with Paul, "I forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before," &c.; and it is a grief of heart to them that they cannot be more holy. This makes them groan under the remains of sin, saying with Paul, "Wretched man that I am," who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?"

7. If you be really under the standard lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord, you may know it by this: whenever you are at any time worsted by sin, you will not be a volunteer, but a captive to it. When sin overcomes the believer, he reckons himself in captivity and bondage as Paul did: "I find a law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin, which is in my members." You know, a loyal subject and faithful soldier may be taken captive by a foreign enemy: but then there is a great odds between the man, though in the enemy's hand, and another that deserts his king and his colours, and goes over to the enemy's side. Now, the case with the believer is, that though he sin, yet he does not go over to the enemy's side: no, sin besets him, betrays him, surprises him; and while he is taken captive by it, he wearies of its drudgery, and never reckons himself at liberty, till he be brought

back again to his Captain, his colours, and company. When he is in company with sin and sinners, he is ready to say, "Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar." I will never be at liberty, till the fetters of ignorance, unbelief, vanity, and carnality, be quite shaken off. O to be wholly rid of this evil heart of unbelief, which turns me away from the living God! O that the very remains of sin were ruined in me, and to be without the reach of sin, and all temptations and occasions of it! So much for trial.

A *third* use may be by way of *Lamentation* that the standard-bearer, and his standard, are so little seen among us at this day; the Spirit of the Lord is departed in a great measure. *Quest.* How does it appear, say you, that the Spirit of the Lord is departed? I answer, It is evident from this, that the enemy is coming in like a flood. And here I will tell you of several floods, that are running with a very impetuous current, by which multitudes are carried away at this very day.

1. A flood of atheism and blasphemy, many saying in their hearts, "There is no God;" yea, atheism and blasphemy expressed and uttered, both by tongue and pen against our glorious Emmanuel. I have seen books published of late, the scope of which is to ridicule all the miracles he wrought upon earth, and to make him one of the most arrant impostors that ever appeared upon earth: and these books are bought and spread through many corners of the land, especially by people of fashion; things are vented, that would make any Christian ears to tingle, and their hearts to tremble.

2. A flood of erroneous doctrine is come in upon us. At every assembly almost, we have representations of the growth of Popery in the north of Scotland. The Arian error, denying the supreme Deity of the eternal Son of God, is vented in our church, by which the foundation and corner-stone that God has laid in Zion is struck at; and if this foundation could be destroyed, what should the righteous do? A flood of Arminian errors runs in our day, exalting the freedom of man's will to the prejudice of the freedom and sovereignty of the grace of God, and exalting reason above revelation. A flood of anti-evangelical errors, by which attempts are made to worm out the gospel, and the power of godliness. Some have crept into the church, who, instead of preaching the gospel, entertain poor people with empty harangues of morality, or something worse, even in the hearing of our national assembly; and yet such things pass without censure. Does not this say that the enemy is coming in like a flood, and the Spirit of the Lord departed?

3. There is a flood of superstition, and superstitious worship, running in our land at this day, and multitudes of the higher rank are carried away with the flood. A flood of church-tyranny is broken out. God has indeed delivered us from open Popish and Prelatic tyranny and persecution, under which we groaned for many years: but another sort of tyranny is broken in among us, under a mask, by which the poor people of God are oppressed in their Christian rights and privileges; particularly in the choice and election of their own pastors. How are the sheep and flock of Christ bleating and mourning through several corners of the land, who find themselves peeled and spoiled by patrons, and others joining hands with them? There is a flood of profanity broken out in our day; some have arrived at that pitch of wickedness, as to turn every thing serious and sacred to matter of laughter and ridicule. O what a flood of cursing and swearing, lying, murdering, cheating, stealing, backbiting, malice, envy, covetousness, Sabbath-breaking, does prevail among us! What a flood of neutrality prevails about the things of God! how many Gallios, who are easy whether the interest of Christ sink or swim, if it go well with their own worldly and civil concerns! What a flood of prevailing unbelief; not only infidelity, rampant among that sort of men that I was speaking of, but a flood of unbelief among the professors of the name of Christ! May not that old complaint be renewed at this day, "Who hath believed our report?" How many are there, who make God a liar, by refusing to set their seal to the record God has given of his Son? What a flood of hypocrisy! men carrying the mask or appearance of religion, who are strangers to the life and power of it; "have a name to live, yet dead in trespasses and sins!" What a flood of apostacy and backsliding; some who, through the knowledge of Christ, seemed to "escape the pollutions of the world, returning with the dog to their vomit, and with the sow that was washed, to wallow in the mire!" Thus, you see, there are many dangerous floods running in our day. Does not all this say, that our blessed Standard-bearer, the Spirit of the Lord, is in a great measure departed?

As a farther evidence of his departure, I will tell you in a few words, how far the enemy is come in.

1. He is come within our borders; many, if not all of these floods, are already within our borders. Indeed, the flood of Arian heresy staid for awhile in England and Ireland; but now it is within the borders of Scotland, and of the church of God therein: it was never heard of, since the reformation, to be within our borders, till now; and usually, when an ene-

my is at or within the borders of a land, the inhabitants take the alarm.

2. But, sirs, I will tell you more, that the enemy is not only come into our borders, but he has entered the palaces, and, some say, the pulpits of our Zion. How much of sin, Satan, and the world, do we that are ministers bring along with us, even when we come forth to people in the name of God! Yea, it is to be feared, that that word is too much verified in our day, cited already, Jude 4. I have heard it affirmed, and that very openly, that Arian doctrine was taught and vented from some pulpits of the kingdom.

3. I will adventure to say more, that the enemy is come in the length of our judicatories, these thrones of judgment. Has not the Arian heresy been before the bar of our national assembly, and a process upon that head been under the consideration of all the presbyteries of the kingdom? It would have been thought a strange thing for that damning heresy to set up its head once a-day within the borders of our Zion; far more to have such a thing before the supreme judicatory of this national church, without the heavy sentence of deposition or excommunication pronounced against the guilty person; and yet all the censure in this case is only a suspension, and a door left for an after assembly to take it off. Does not this say, that the enemy is come in like a flood?

4. The enemy is come into the dwellings of our Zion. How many families are there, where there is not the least shadow of the worship of God? Does not that say, that the devil has his seat there; the god of this world reigns in these families, where he prevails so far, as to justle God out of that worship that is due to him?

5. Has not the enemy come into the closets; yea, to the secret chambers of the heart, which God challenges as his due? As for the wicked, there is no doubt but the devil is within their heart; "the god of this world rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience;" sin, which is the first-born of the devil, has an absolute command over them; every thought and imagination of their heart is evil. As for the world, Solomon tells us, that it is set in the heart of the wicked and ungodly. Yea, where these enemies have lost their power and dominion, I mean, in the hearts of the godly, yet are they making strange inroads, to the dishonour of God, to the discredit of religion, and the breaking of the peace and quiet of the gracious soul.

Thus then you see, there is sad ground of lamentation, that the enemy is come like a flood: and what is the reason of all this? the Spirit of the Lord, which should lift up his standard, is departed.

Quest. Why does not the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard against the enemy? I answer, Because his standard when lifted up is not followed. We do not follow the standard of the word, in the administration of the affairs of Christ's kingdom; but the standard of carnal policy, studying to please this and the other gentleman that is patron of a parish: we are broken in judgment, because we willingly "walk after the commandments of men." And the Spirit of the Lord leaves us, and does not lift up his standard, because we do not observe his motions and operations upon our souls; we do not cherish his influences; we walk in darkness, and see no light, because we do not follow the light when we have it. And is it any wonder then though he depart from us?

THE STANDARD OF HEAVEN LIFTED UP AGAINST THE POWERS OF HELL, AND THEIR AUXILIARIES*

The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.—ISA. LIX. 19.

I go on now to a *fourth* use of this doctrine, and that is by way of *Consolation* to believers; particularly honest-hearted communicants, who have both the public cause of Christ, and the private case of their own souls at heart. Perhaps, when they take a view of the enemy coming in like a flood upon the church, and the more private assaults made upon their own souls, they are ready to say with Jehoshaphat, "We know not what to do against this great company that cometh up against us." If this be thy case, I have good news from the Lord to tell thee; namely, that when the enemy comes in like a flood, *The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.*

More particularly; Art thou perplexed and troubled in spirit, because of the floods that are broken in upon the church of God, threatening ruin to the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of it? When you look to the pass that religion is brought to, and take a view of the enemy that is come into the borders, and palaces, and assemblies of our Zion, you are ready to cry out, "By whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." Here is encouragement, Jacob shall arise by the mighty God of Jacob. I own, indeed, that I cannot

* Preached on Monday evening.

give you any infallible ground of faith from the scriptures o truth, that the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard for our church, more than for any particular church upon the face of the earth. We are indeed assured, that God will have a church on earth, and that "the gates of hell shall never prevail," so far as to raze and ruin her totally; but I know of no absolute promise in the word of God, that he will preserve a church to himself in any particular nation, or among any society of men whatsoever. We see the church of the Jews unchurched, the tabernacle of David is taken down, the natural seed and posterity of Abraham are cut off, and cast out for many hundreds of years. The once famous churches of the Lesser Asia are turned Mahometan mosques. The church of Rome, whose faith was spoken of throughout the whole world, is now turned to the seat of Antichrist. So that, I say, no particular church has any absolute or infallible security, that the enemy shall not come in like a flood, and sweep away the very face of religion from among them. But yet, there are some things from which we may adventure to gather hope, that the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard, and drive back the enemy that is coming so far in upon the church of Scotland.

1. Is it not ground of hope, that there is a goodly number of mourners in our Zion, who are sighing and crying for all the abominations that are found in the midst of us? There are some who yet take pleasure in our Zion, and have a kindness for her stones and rubbish, and who are lifting up a prayer for the remnant that is left. God has a great regard to this remnant, to their prayers and tears; and he says, "For the sighing of the poor, for the crying of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord."

2. God is here and there raising up and sending forth some young men to the ministry, who are endowed with his Spirit, and whom he has polished as shafts for his work and service, in building up his own, and battering down Satan's kingdom. God uses not to polish instruments for work and service, and then to lay them by as useless; he sends not forth labourers, where he has no harvest to reap.

3. There is a spring of young converts here and there through the land, in whom "some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel is to be found;" yea, a spring arisen even in some places, where religion seems to be most borne down and oppressed: which says, that the Lord will maintain his ground; and that he is like the wise husbandman, who keeps a proper measure of seed to sow his field, a little leaven to leaven the lump.

4. Many of the dear saints of God, who are now triumph-

ing about the throne, ministers and others, have gone off the stage, in the faith and persuasion of it, that God would yet appear in his glory, for building up of his Zion in Scotland; and that there should yet be more glorious days seen in our land, than ever we or our fathers have seen. These, I say, are some grounds of hope, that the Lord will not altogether leave us to be carried down the flood, but that he will yet lift up the standard, and display his glory. I shall only add, that whatever defections there may be among us, yet there is not wanting some to give their honest testimony against them, and who through grace are resolved to cleave to the standard of the law and testimony, which the Spirit of the Lord has lifted up; and we desire to believe, that he will not forsake those who seek him, and desire to cleave to him.

But, after all these things, there is no security against some sweeping flood or other, for which we in this land seem to be ripening apace. But though floods of error, persecution, and public calamities should break loose; yet it is ground of comfort to the Lord's people, that even by these floods God is still advancing and promoting his own work; the wrath and corruptions of men shall praise him, and the remainder of his wrath he will restrain.

Quest. What good work of God can be advanced and promoted, by letting the enemy come in like a flood upon his church?

I answer, 1. His discovering work is advanced. By letting floods run, he thus separates between the precious and the vile, between the chaff and the wheat. A flood, as I was saying, in the doctrinal part, is of a sweeping nature, it sweeps away loose timber and stones, or any other thing that lies in its way, not well fastened in the earth. Just so is it here, with respect to these floods of error, defections, or tribulations; loose ill-grounded professors are commonly carried down the stream, while they that are rooted and grounded in Christ, and built upon the blessed foundation that God has laid in Zion, their house stands, because it is built upon a rock. Now, God will have the one distinguished or separate from the other, that they who are approved of God, may be made manifest.

2. By letting the floods run awhile, the Lord's purging work is advanced. By floods of trouble and persecution, he "washes away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and purges the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof. By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin." Yea, by letting the floods of superstition, error, and corruption, prevail for awhile in the church, he can bring about a reformation. You know, in the natural

body, peccant humours will wade through the body for a long while, and create a great deal of disorder, till they form in some disease, ulcer, or such like trouble; and when they come to a crisis, they get a turn, and so contribute to after health. Just so it is with the church of God, the mystical body of Christ; errors and corruptions will wade for a long time through the church, till they come to some head, and then the skilful Physician of Gilead applies a proper remedy for purging or correcting these evils, which had been for a long time latent.

3. God's uniting work is frequently advanced, by suffering the enemy to come in like a flood. You know, that metal, though broken into many pieces, yet when cast into the furnace, will run together into a lump. Commonly, in a time of peace and prosperity, divisions, animosities, and heart-burnings prevail; but when the floods of error, trouble, and defections break out, they that love the Lord and his cause unite together against the common enemy. I have heard it to be the practice of some travellers in the northern parts of our own country, when they come to deep and strong waters in their way, though before they travelled in a straggling manner, yet when they come to the dangerous water, they join arm to arm, and in this posture their united strength stands more firm against the stream, than if every one were apart; so, when the floods of errors, defections, afflictions, or persecutions, are suffered to run, they who were much separated and divided through private contentions, will join hand in hand to make a stand against the common enemy.

4. God's elucidating or enlightening work is advanced, by letting the enemy come in like a flood; particularly, by the floods of error that break in upon the church, truth comes many a time to be set in a clearer light: and "as we have heard, so have we seen this in the city of the living God." Not to insist upon every thing, I believe the doctrine of the glorious Trinity, and of the supreme, independent, and self-existent Deity of the Son of God, was never set in a clearer light since the reformation, than it has been since that damnable error of Arianism was broached among us. And never does the faith, love, patience, zeal, and other militant graces of the saints of God, shine so brightly to the glory of God, and the credit of religion, as when floods of trouble and persecution are running in the church. And thus that promise is accomplished, of "bringing forth truth unto victory;" and that, Is. liv. 11: "Oh thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted, behold, I will lay thy stones with fair colours, and lay thy foundations with sapphires."

5. God's enlarging work is many times promoted by the

floods of trouble that break in upon the church. The spreading of the gospel, the in-gathering of the rest of the elect, is thus promoted, as you see from Acts viii. 3—5. The gospel, like the camomile, the more it is trod upon, the more does it spread; the more that the devil and his agents study to suppress it, and bear it down, the more does it prevail.

6. God's fructifying work is advanced by these floods. We are told, that the river Nile at certain times swells so high, as to overflow the land of Egypt; but by its overflowing, the ground is rendered exceeding fertile: so the Lord suffers the floods to break in upon his church, that he may promote her fertility in grace and holiness. It has been the observation of some, that religion was never in such a thriving condition in this land, as when Episcopal tyranny and arbitrary power were prevailing. Thus, you see, that God promotes the designs of his love and glory, even by letting the floods run for a time, before he lift the standard, and drive back the enemy. This may serve to comfort and encourage the hearts of the Lord's people at this day, against the melancholy aspect of things, with respect to the public cause and interest of Christ.

But now, some exercised soul may be ready to say, These things you have been speaking of, with relation to the church of God, the public interest of Christ, do not so much trouble me; I desire to believe that God will keep his hand about his own work in the land; but that which afflicts me, is indwelling sin. The enemy is not only come into our borders, our palaces, our judicatories, our dwellings; but, alas! he is come still farther, he is come in like a flood upon my heart and soul, and I know not what to do. O! will ever the Spirit of the Lord lift up a standard, and cast down his strong-holds there? Well, poor believer, I tell thee, for thy comfort, that though the flood has overflowed even to the neck, although the waters be come into thy soul, *the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him there.* Allow me to ask, what is the particular enemy that has come in like a flood upon thee? I think I am capable to assure thee from the word of God, that whatever be the enemy, *the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him.*

Perhaps one may be saying, Alas! Satan has broken in upon me with a flood of temptations, and the flood is so strong, that I am like to be carried off my feet. I am assaulted with temptations to blasphemous errors, self-murder, and what not? yea, to such evils, as I am ashamed to let any of the world know of. Well, poor soul, is this thy case? I tell thee, for thy comfort, a God of truth has said it, that his Spirit shall lift up the standard, and drive back the enemy that comes in like a

flood upon thee: "And has he said it, and will he not do it? has he spoken it, and shall it not come to pass?" Take this promise in the text, in the hand of faith, hold it up to the enemy, and this word of truth shall be thy shield and buckler. This was the way that Christ dealt with the enemy, when he came in upon him like a flood, Matth. iv. he lifted up the banner of the word, the shield of God's faithfulness, saying, "Thus and thus it is written;" and thereby the enemy was driven back, and put to the worst. Follow the example of thy great General; tell the enemy, "It is written, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard against thee: It is written, The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent, and tread thee under his feet:" and therefore I will believe and hope, believe and wait, till the Lord, according to his promise, come in for my relief. And if thou do so, depend upon it, the enemy will soon lose heart, and the strength of his temptations will fall.

Perhaps another may be saying, Alas! there is a flood of darkness broken in upon my soul, that I know not where I am, or what I am doing; though once in a-day I thought the Lord manifested himself to me, yet now "the Lord hath forsaken me, and my God hath forgotten me; the Comforter that should relieve my soul, is far from me; and I, whither shall I cause my sorrow to go?" I answer, This is no strange case, for the children of light, to walk in darkness, yea, in such darkness that they can see no light; but be assured, that "unto the upright light shall arise in darkness." And, therefore, "trust in the name of the Lord, stay thyself upon thy God: his goings forth are prepared as the morning; he that shall come will come, and will not tarry." When the Spirit of the Lord displays his standard, reveals the glory of Christ, he will make light, even the light of the knowledge of his glory to shine through every corner of thy soul.

Perhaps another may be saying, There is a whole flood of challenges that fill my bosom; I am indeed in darkness, the Lord is hiding; but that is not all, it is my own sins that have done it; and God is saying to me, "This is thy wickedness, because it is bitter.—Hast thou not procured this unto thyself?—Thine own iniquities separate between thee and thy God." I answer, All this may be true; and if true, thou hast indeed cause to mourn and weep in secret places; but yet I would not have thee to mourn like them that have no hope, but turn to a God in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses to them; run to the blood of sprinkling, the fountain opened to the house of David, that washes from sin and uncleanness. The Spirit of the Lord has displayed the banner of his everlasting righteousness, and

brought it near in the gospel offer and promise, that so the guilty sinner and discouraged believer, may come under it, and find ground of hope and courage under all challenges, saying as the apostle does, Rom. viii. "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" &c. Improve the promise of pardon, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own name's sake." Improve the name of a reconciled God, "The Lord pardoning iniquity." Pray, with David, "Pardon mine iniquity, for it is very great."

Alas! may another say, indwelling sin and corruption break in upon me like a flood; I have whole swarms of hellish abominations within me. Well, here is comfort, *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.* A discovery of Christ in the light of the Spirit, wastes, weakens, and withers the body of sin. And therefore, O plead, and believe the promise, for the Spirit is promised for this very end, Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. The Spirit takes the holiness of the Head, and applies it to the members by which sin is weakened, and holiness is advanced. Has not the Lord said, "Sin shall not have dominion over you; I will subdue their iniquities?" Art thou oppressed with remaining ignorance? Well, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard; for he is a *Spirit of wisdom and revelation;* he is *the anointing*, by which we are made to *know all things.* Art thou oppressed with unbelief, like a flood carrying thee away from the living God? Well, here is comfort: the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard against it; for he is a *Spirit of faith*, and he testifies of Christ, as "the Author and Finisher of faith," and will "fulfil in thee all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." Art thou oppressed with remaining enmity against God, discovering itself in the works of the flesh? Well, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard; for he is a *Spirit of love*, his banner is a banner of love, his peculiar work and province is to shed abroad the love of God upon the heart; and when he discovers the love and loveliness of our glorious Redeemer, enmity is driven back: nothing so much kills enmity, as the discovery of the love of God in Christ. O! says another, the vanity and carnality of my spirit comes in like a flood upon me; I no sooner set myself to any spiritual work, but the world and its concerns, come in like a flood, and divert my thoughts from the things of eternal moment. Well, here is comfort; the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard; for he is a *Spirit of power*, by which we overcome the world. He it is that gives wings to the soul, by which it mounts up, like the eagle, above things visible and corporeal, where Christ is at the right hand of God.

O! says another, I have so many errors in my heart, that I fear my heart fall in with the errors of the day, and so I be carried away with the flood. "Blessed is the man that feareth always;" but do not fear with a fear of distrust, for the Spirit of the Lord will lift up the standard of truth, and he is given to lead his people into all truth; he is the *Spirit of a sound mind*, to enable believers to distinguish between light and darkness, between truth and error; he it is that causeth the wayfaring man, though a fool, to walk in the way of truth without erring. O! says another, grace is so weak, and corruption so strong, that I fear any little spark of grace that is in me be carried away, and ruined by the flood. I answer, Be encouraged, the Spirit of the Lord will carry on his own work, and lift a standard in its defence; "he will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, till he hath brought forth judgment unto victory." O! says another, I can find no quiet or rest for the workings of Satan, and corruption together; they are making perpetual inroads upon me by night and by day. *Answ.* Poor soul, here is comfort, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard; he will testify of Christ, and then thou shalt have rest in him, as "under the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Is. xi. 10: Christ is there set up by the Spirit of the Lord, "as an ensign to the nations;" and then immediately it is added, "Unto him shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." You have another sweet promise to this purpose, Is. lxiii. 14: "As a beast goeth down into the valley, the Spirit of the Lord causeth him to rest." It is the work of the Spirit, to show to the weary soul the place where Christ "causeth his flock to rest at noon."

Another, perhaps, may be saying, There is a terrible flood breaking in upon me, and that is a flood of divine terrors. I may say with David, Psal. lxxvii., "I remembered God, and was troubled." "With God is terrible majesty," indeed, and his terrors set themselves in array against me. *Answ.* Here is comfort, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard, and drive away these terrors; for he is "the Comforter," and Christ has promised to send him in this capacity; "I will send the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost; and when he comes, thy heart shall rejoice, and thy joy shall no man take from thee.—We have not received the Spirit of bondage again to fear, but we have received the Spirit of adoption, by which we cry, Abba, Father." And it is his usual way, after he has wounded and broken, to bind up and heal, to "make the bones which he hath broken to rejoice."

The fear of death, may another say, breaks in upon me like a flood, the king of terrors keeps me in perpetual bondage,

I am not able to look upon his grim countenance. *Answ.* The Spirit of the Lord shall lift up the standard; he shall discover the glory of Christ, and then thou shalt be put in case to say, "O death, where is thy sting? Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." Christ is the plague of death, and the destruction of the grave; he has wrung the keys of hell and death out of the devil's hand: and therefore "lift up thy head, for the day of thy redemption draweth near." So much for consolation.

A *fifth* use of this doctrine shall be by way of *Exhortation.* Is it so, that by lifting up the standard, by displaying the glory of Christ, the enemy is repulsed that was coming in like a flood? then the exhortation is, Answer the design of the Spirit of the Lord in lifting up the standard. Take this exhortation in the two following branches:—

First branch. You heard, in the doctrinal part, that the standard is a gathering ensign, by which volunteers are enlisted, new soldiers taken into the army. Well, sirs, Christ has set up his ensign in the dispensation of the everlasting gospel; and it is prophesied concerning him, that "unto him shall the gathering of the people be;" and, therefore, let sinners gather unto him, and give up their names, as volunteers in his service. O that I knew what arguments to use with sinners, to persuade them to gather unto Christ, the blessed standard that is lifted up and displayed in the everlasting gospel!

1. Consider, that every thing in and about Christ invites you to gather and flock to him.

1*st*, He has a gathering name. The very name of some renowned generals is enough to make volunteers flock to their standard. Well, sirs, here is a General of the greatest name of any that ever was heard of; he "hath a name above every name;" is renowned in heaven and earth; "his name shall endure for ever; his name shall last like the sun;" his name is "Emmanuel, God with us;" his name is "Redeemer;" his name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace." O is not his name a gathering name?

2*dly*, He has a gathering arm: Is. xl. 11: "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm." His arms are everlasting arms; and these everlasting arms shall be underneath thee, if you engage in his service; and he stretches out his arms all the day long to sinners, saying, "Behold me, behold me."

3*dly*, He has a gathering wing: Matth. xxiii. at the close, "How often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth

her chickens under her wings!" He is even as fond of the salvation of sinners, as ever the hen was to gather her brood under her feathers, when she hovers over them with the greatest tenderness; "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust."

4*thly*, He has a gathering voice; he spake but a word to Mary, calling her by name; and immediately she answers, "Rabboni, my master." His voice is the voice of the charmer, which charms never so wisely; the melody of his voice, when heard by the ear of faith, has such a powerful charm with it, that it quickens the dead: "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live," John v. 25. His voice makes the lame man to leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing.

5*thly*, He has a gathering trumpet, the sound of which goes to the end of the earth: Rom. x. 18: "Have they not heard? Yes, verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." This gathering trumpet of the everlasting gospel you read of, Is. xxvii. 13: "And it shall come to pass, in that day, that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in the holy mount at Jerusalem." This is a gathering trumpet indeed, and blessed are they that know the joyful sound of it, so as to be gathered by it to the blessed Shiloh: for "they shall walk in the light of his countenance, and in his name shall they rejoice all the day."

6*thly*, He has a gathering ensign or standard, Is. xi. 10. But this leads to,

2. A *second* motive, to wit, the qualities of the standard which the Spirit of the Lord lifts up.

1*st*, It is an ancient standard. The most ancient standard of the army is always the most honourable. Well, sirs, here is a standard which for antiquity excels all other standards; for it is "set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was;" it was set up in the counsel of peace; it was set up in Paradise, and displayed against the old serpent, for the injury he had done to the woman and her seed.

2*dly*, It is a victorious standard, it carries victory along with it wherever it goes; the very lifting up of the standard conquers: "If I be lifted up, I will draw all men after me." It strikes terror to the heart of the dragon and his angels, Satan and his confederates. As the walls of Jericho fell down at the sound of the rams' horns, so the strong-holds of Satan and his works fall down before the standard, 2 Cor. x. 4—6.

3*dly*, It is a lovely and beautiful standard: Cant. ii. 4: "His

banner over me was love." This standard is altogether lovely: and whenever it is displayed in its glory, in the view of a sinner, immediately the bands of love fall upon the soul; he is "drawn with cords of a man, and with bands of love." So lovely is this standard, that its lustre and glory reflect a lustre upon all that behold it, or that enlist themselves under it. Balaam, viewing the armies of Israel under the covert of this standard, was so stricken, that he cries out, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! The people shall dwell alone, and shall not be reckoned among the nations."

4*thly*, It is a durable and lasting standard. Other standards wear, and the moth shall eat them up; but this standard is ever the same: Heb. xiii. 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." It is everlasting: Heb. i. 10—12; there you have an account of the perpetuity of this standard: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest; and they all shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed: but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail."

5*thly*, It is a very awful and terrible standard to hell and all its confederates; the church, when under this standard, is said to be "terrible as an army with banners." Hence the devils, when they saw Christ upon earth, in the days of his flesh, were struck with such terror, that they cried out, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time? O who would not gather under such a standard as this?

8. To engage you to get under this standard, will you but take a view of the mottos of it. It has several mottos, according to the different displays of it.

1*st*, If we view the standard as it is displayed against Satan the old dragon, the destroyer of mankind, then the motto of the standard is, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." Or that, Isa. lxiii. 4: "The day of vengeance is in mine heart." Or that, Heb. ii. 14: "Through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

2*dly*, View the standard as it is displayed towards sinners of Adam's family to whom the gospel is dispensed; then the motto of it reads, "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotton Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. For God sent not his Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world

through him might be saved." Or that, 2 Cor. v. 19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." Or, 1 Tim. i. 15: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." Sometimes it bears this motto; "God is love;" sometimes you will read this motto; "The Lord our righteousness;" sometimes you may read it thus; "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

3dly, View the standard as displayed against obstinate sinners, standing it out against a God of love, refusing to come under the victorious banner; and so it bears this terrible motto, Heb. ii. 3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" Or that, Heb. x. 28, 29: "They that despised Moses' law, died without mercy: of how much sorer punishment shall they be thought worthy, who crucify the Son of God afresh?" &c. Sometimes you may read it thus; "God shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of all them that go on in their trespasses."

4thly, View this standard, as it is displayed towards the saints, real believers, who have actually enlisted themselves as volunteers in the army; then the motto of it sometimes reads like that, Jer. xxxi. 3: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Sometimes, when the standard is seen, the motto of it will read, as Deut. xxxiii. 3: "All his saints are in thy hand." Or that, John x. 28, 29: "I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all: and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Sometimes it reads thus; "I, even I am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own name's sake. Sometimes you will read it thus; "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee; I will never turn away from thee to do thee good." Sometimes thus; "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death," Rev. i. 18. But I might enlarge here till midnight, telling you of the beautiful mottos of this standard, towards the soldiers of the army; I shall only say, in general, at every opening of the standard, at every display of the glory of Christ that is made to the saints, there is always some motto to be seen and read with it; and it cannot be otherwise, for it is the Spirit of the Lord that lifts up the standard, in, and by, and with his own word. Now, may not all this allure and invite you to come in under it?

4. To encourage volunteers to come in under this royal standard, consider what encouraging proclamations are is-

sued out, to induce you to take on with the glorious General. We, as under-officers and heralds, are sent out to intimate these presents to all and every one whom it may concern; and that is every creature sprung of Adam; we may well usher them in with a warn-word and oyes, to arrest your attention.

1*st*, Then, Be it known to all men, and the sons of men, it is given out from the royal standard of Heaven, even a proclamation of liberty and freedom to all the slaves and vassals of hell. Christ, the great Captain of salvation, has broken up the devil's prison, "broken the gates of brass, and cut asunder the bars of iron;" and he calls "to the prisoners to *come forth;* to them that sit in darkness, *Show yourselves;*" the Son of God by his proclamation makes you free, and therefore be ye free indeed. Whosoever they be that will come in under the standard of Heaven, shall be free from the guilt of sin, that it shall not condemn them; from the dominion of sin, that it shall not reign over them; from the pollution of sin, that it shall not separate between God and them: they shall be free from the law as a covenant, and from its sentence of death; from Satan, the roaring lion, that he shall not be able to devour them.

2*dly*, From the royal standard of Heaven it is given out, and we proclaim peace to you who are rebels, and have been in arms against God: Is. xxvii. 4, 5: "Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. But let them take hold of my strength, and be at peace with me, and they shall make peace with me." The royal Prince of peace sends us out as ambassadors in his name, "praying you in Christ's stead as though God did beseech you by us, that you be reconciled to God." We proclaim "peace, peace to them that are afar off, and to them that are near." O rebels, lay down your rebellious arms, surrender yourselves to the great King, whose name is "the Lord of hosts."

3*dly*, From the royal standard of Heaven we issue forth a proclamation of pardon to condemned criminals, lying under sentence of death. See a surprising proclamation of pardon, Is. xliii. 25, which you may read. The very name of the glorious General is, "The Lord pardoning iniquity."—"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon," or multiply to pardon; you shall have a free discharge of all the debt you owe to divine justice; "the handwriting against you, which is contrary to" you, shall be cancelled.

4*thly*, From this royal standard a proclamation of health comes forth to the diseased. Are there any maimed or lame,

halt or withered creatures here, who are unfit for service, cannot creep or walk in the Lord's way? We call you in the name of the great General, and tell you, that there is room for you; that moment you come in under the standard, though *lame*, you *shall leap like a hart*. Perhaps you think yourselves very unfit for the war, after you have been so lamed by sin and Satan; but we tell you good news, when you come in under this standard, "the bones which were broken shall be made to rejoice."

5thly, From this royal standard we issue a proclamation of great riches to the poor. O sirs, here is "gold tried in the fire," gold better than the gold of Ophir, lying scattered about the tents of the great King, whose name is the "Lord of hosts. Riches and honour are with me; yea, durable riches and righteousness:" and "we preach among you Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ."

6thly, A proclamation of "bread to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; fat things full of marrow, wines on the lees well refined.—Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars. She hath killed her beasts, she hath mingled her wine; she hath also furnished her table. She hath sent forth her maidens, she crieth upon the highest places of the city, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled," Prov. ix. at the beginning. Again, we issue forth a proclamation of marriage with the Son of God, to them that have "played the harlot with many lovers;" a proclamation of life, to you that are "dead in trespasses and sins; O hear the voice of the Son of God, for they that hear shall live." Thus you see what glorious encouragement the great General, whose standard we lift up in the everlasting gospel, gives to lost sinners, to come and enlist themselves in his service.

But now you may readily ask me, To what end or purpose do you thus encourage us to gather in under the royal standard of the Prince of the kings of the earth? I answer, Soldiers, you know, take on for the wars; so it is for the wars of the Lord, we are come to take you on in the service of the great King. But this leads me to,

A *second* branch of the exhortation. A standard, as I showed in the doctrinal part, is an ensign of war. The glorious Son of God came into this lower world, upon an expedition to spoil principalities and powers, to overturn Satan's usurped kingdom, to condemn sin and make an end of it, and to overcome the world; and wherever Christ is preached, men, women, and children, are called, and charged to join him; to "come forth to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty." And, therefore, let me exhort

all of you, especially you who have been at his table, taking the military oath to the great Lord, to "fight the good fight of faith."—When we call you to come in and gather under his banner, it is not to stand idle: no, no; Christianity is a fight, it is a battle, a hot battle, and you will find it so; for "the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." The armies of hell are in your way; lions and leopards will encounter you; and therefore, "watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong." Now, in prosecuting this exhortation, I shall endeavour to answer a few questions relative to the spiritual war you are engaged in.

Quest. 1. Who are the enemies we have to deal with in this warfare? and where lie they encamped? As to the first part of the question, it was answered already in the doctrinal part, that Satan, sin, and the world, are the enemies you are to engage with. And as for the place of their encampment, they are so swift and subtle, that their motions are very uncertain; as they put on very different shapes, so they have very uncertain motions. As for Satan, he lodges in the air, therefore called "The prince of the power of the air." The world, again, is on every hand of you; wherever you go, whatever company you fall into, whatever business you are engaged in, you will find its snares on every side of you. As for sin, its head-quarters is in the heart; therefore are we commanded to "keep the heart with all diligence," because it keeps a close correspondence with the devil and the world, through the avenue of the imagination and outward senses.

Quest. 2. What is the quarrel or the ground of this war? for it is the cause or ground of a war that makes it lawful. Never was war commenced upon a better ground or quarrel; the honour of God, and our own eternal interest are concerned in it. And that you may understand the ground of it the better, know, when God created this beautiful world, and all things in it, after he had prepared and fitted it for habitation, he created man, and set him in Paradise, as his viceroy, gave all things into his hand, and put all things under his feet. Satan, whom God had cast out of heaven, with his angels, for pride, having ranged through this visible creation, lights upon this little globe of earth, and at last finds out our first parents in Paradise. Whenever he saw man, with the glorious image of God stamped upon him, he was filled with indignation against God, and set his hellish wisdom at work to contrive the ruin of our first parents, and all their posterity; and accordingly he effected it, after the manner that you read of, Gen. iii. That he might rub an affront upon the Ma-

jesty of heaven, and his viceroy, he defaces the image of God, enslaves man to himself, and takes possession of this lower world as his own: called therefore "the god of this world." He disturbs the beautiful order of this lower world, fills it with sin, vanity, and trouble, under which the whole creation groans and travails in pain. Well, when this is done, the Son of God beholds it from his throne, "high and lifted up," flies from heaven to earth, arraigns the devil and our first parents, calls them to an account of what was done; and immediately sets up his standard of war, issues forth a proclamation of war against the devil, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent:" and, by this one word, which was the first lifting up of the standard, he wrests the one half of the then world out of the devil's hand; for, from the original, it appears, that the woman was converted by the uttering of the first promise. The words may be read, "I will put enmity between thee and this woman." And ever since, the Son of God has been carrying on the war against the devil, wresting his captives out of his hand, and will never leave the field till he has driven Satan out of his kingdom; and then "we look for a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Thus, you see the ground of the war.

Quest. 3. Who is the General, under whose conduct we are to fight? I answer, as you heard already, The glorious Son of God, "the Lord of hosts, the Lord mighty in battle," is our leader and commander. And I shall only give you these two or three qualities of the General:—

1. He is so wise, that all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; "his eyes are as a flame of fire;" and there is not any thing that is not manifest in his sight. He penetrates into the deepest counsels of his enemies; "he discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death."

2. He is an experienced General; for he is "the ancient of days, set up from everlasting." He knows the enemy's strength, and had the experience of his assaults when here upon earth; and his experience of temptations makes him ready to succour them that are tempted.

3. He is a stout and martial General, he was never dared nor daunted; when he had the wrath of his Father, the powers of hell and earth to encounter, he set his face like a flint against all. See how he challenges all his enemies to encounter him, Is. l. 7—9: "Who is mine adversary? let him come near to me. I know that I shall not be ashamed. Who is he that shall condemn me? lo, they all shall wax old as a garment; the moth shall eat them up."

4. He is a powerful General; all power in heaven and in earth is in his hand; for he is "the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong for himself." He spoiled principalities and powers, he treads them and their confederates in his anger, and tramples them in his fury.

5. He is a victorious General, he never lost a battle or engagement since the war commenced in Paradise; and, as a token of his victory, he has carried the spoils of sin, Satan, death, and hell, along with him to heaven, Psal. lxviii. 18: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive," &c.

Quest. 4. Who bears the expenses of the war? I answer, The war is undertaken and carried on upon the expenses of the great General: and well is he able to bear it: for "in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily;" he calls none to go a warfare upon their own charges. He himself is the armory of the house of David, where hang the shields of the men of war. Whatever the Christian soldier wants in his expedition, he hath it ready at hand; as,

1. The soldier must be provided of meat and drink. Well, the General will see to this. "Thy bread shall be given thee, and thy waters shall be sure:" and before his soldiers want, he will feed them with his own flesh and blood; and all the soldiers of his army, live upon the flesh and blood of the General: "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you."

2. The soldier must have his clothing. Well, the General will see to that also; they will buy of him white raiment to cover the shame of their nakedness; and they all pride themselves in the robe and garment that they receive from their General, Is. lxi. 10: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness."

5. The soldier must have his arms provided him. Well, the General will see to that also: Eph. vi. you see there a complete stand of arms the General has provided for his soldiers, "the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the sword of the Spirit." Here is nothing wanting, either to offend the enemy, or to defend the soul in its warfare.

4. The soldiers of an army must have garrisons for winter-quarters, where they may be sheltered from stormy wind and tempest. Well, the glorious General will see to this also; yea, he himself is their garrison, "their dwelling-place in all generations, a hiding-place from the storm, a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land."

5. The soldier must have his orders and directions when to move and when to stop. This shall not be wanting either; his law shall be "a lamp unto their feet, and a light unto their path: He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what the Lord thy God requireth of thee." When the soldier is to go on to the battle, he commands him to *fight*, to *stand fast*, to *quit themselves like men*, and to *be strong*. And sometimes he commands them to retreat and flee, "Flee youthful lusts." Speaking of sin he says, "Avoid it, pass not by it, turn from it, and pass away."

6. The soldiers of an army, when sick and wounded, must be looked to. Well, the General is a physician, and a tender-hearted shepherd, who "gathers the lambs with his arms: He healeth the broken in heart, and bindeth up all their wounds; and gives them the oil of joy for mourning, and the garments of praise for a spirit of heaviness." Thus, you see that the whole charges of the war lie upon the great General. In one word, he is the strength of the whole army, and "the glory of their strength;" and he bids them go on in his strength, "making mention of his righteousness, even of his only."

Quest. 5. What auxiliaries has the believer in this war? I answer, The glorious General, although he needs no auxiliaries, yet has abundance at hand in case of need; as,

1. Under his standard, the royal battalion of the divine attributes and perfections stands ready for thy assistance: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about his people, from henceforth even for ever." The perfections of God, through Christ, do, as it were, fix their tents round about the soldier. The power of God stands ready for thy protection, his wisdom for thy direction, his holiness for thy sanctification, his justice for thy absolution through the blood of the Lamb, his goodness to supply thy wants, his mercy to pardon thy sin, his faithfulness to fulfil his promises.

2. There is his army of angels ready to strike in for thy assistance in this war: "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who are the heirs of salvation?" Wherever a believer is, "there is a "Mahanaim, the host of God: The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him."

3. The celestial luminaries, and other creatures of God, are auxiliaries in case of need; they fought in their courses for Israel against Sisera. The locusts, the lice, the caterpillars, and other creatures, came in array against Egypt in their quarrel.

4. All the saints and their prayers are thy auxiliaries, be-

liever; they stand in the same quarrel, they are always praying for thy prosperity and success; and their prayers shall be heard, because the quarrel is the Lord's.

5. He can make enemies themselves thy auxiliaries in this war: "When a man's ways please the Lord, he maketh even his enemies to be at peace with him." The *earth* many times *helps the woman*, as we read, Rev. xii. He rules in the midst of his enemies; and he can take a poor creature out of the devil's army, and set him to fight his battles against him and all his confederates; as we see in the case of Paul, who, before his conversion, breathed out slaughter and cruelty against the disciples of the Lord; but, by converting grace, was made a champion in the cause of Christianity.

Quest. 6. What is the case of deserters in this war, who forsake the General's standard, and turn in to the enemy's camp? I answer, It is death by the martial law of Heaven; deserters and apostates shall be led forth with the workers of iniquity: "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him: He that puts his hand to the plough, and looks back again, is not fit for the kingdom of heaven." Backsliders in heart shall be filled with their own ways, and at last hung up in chains of darkness, as eternal monuments of the dreadful wrath of the General.

Quest. 7. Can any of Christ's true soldiers ever be deserters? *Answ.* No: they may be captives by the enemy, they may be led captive by the law of sin and death; but they shall never be guilty of total and final desertion. *Quest.* What security have they against that? *Answ.* They are secured against total desertion, by the immutability of God: "Whom he loves, he loves unto the end." They are secured against it by the promise of God to the great General, that "his seed shall endure for ever:" by the honour of the General; it would not be for his credit, that principalities and powers, whom he has spoiled, should make a spoil of those that belong to him. They are secured by their union with Christ; they are not only his soldiers, but his members; and his body mystical shall never be mutilated. They are secured against it by the inhabitation of the Holy Ghost, which shall never be taken from him or his seed, as you see in the last verse of this chapter, in which my text lies: "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever." They are secured against desertion by the very life of Christ: "Because I live, ye shall live also." The life of the soldier is bound up in the General: "Our life is hid with Christ in

God." They are secured by the intercession of Christ; "he prays for them, that their faith fail not." In a word, "they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

Quest. 8. How long will the war last? *Answ.* It lasts till death, and no longer; for then the glorious General will sound the retreat, and call his soldiers off the field. Hence Paul rejoiced at the prospect of his dissolution, because then he saw his warfare near a close: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Quest. 9. When the war is ended, what comes of the victorious soldiers? I answer, They "return and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing flee away." And if you would know more particularly what provision the General has made for his volunteers and victorious soldiers, when the war is ended, you may see an account of it in the second and third chapters of the book of the Revelation, at the end of every epistle to the seven churches of the Lesser Asia, which you may read at your own leisure.

The 10th and last question shall be this, Will you give us your best advice, in order to our successful management of our Christian warfare, while we are yet upon the field of battle? Beside what has been offered already in the former part of this discourse, take these following:—

1. See that you be really joined to Christ's standard, lifted up by the Spirit of the Lord. There is not a son of Adam but is born under the devil's colours, wearing his livery; and while you are under the black standard of hell, I mean, in a natural state, you can never fight the battles of the Lord, or strike a fair stroke in his quarrel.

2. Study to be well acquainted with your glorious General, and keep him ever in your view. A sight of him lightens the heart, and inspires the soul with such courage and joy, that though hell, death, and all imaginable danger were in the soul's way, it will not be afraid. Hence the saints are so frequently called to look to him in their Christian work and warfare, Is. xlv. 22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." This is what the soldiers exhort one another to, Heb. xii. 1, 2: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus."

3. Observe carefully the orders of the General. By the martial law, it is death for a soldier to disobey the orders of

his commander; what anarchy and confusion would there be in an army, if it were otherwise? And though kings, parliaments, magistrates, and ministers, or be what they will, command or require you to do otherwise than your General has directed you, you have a ready answer at hand, "Whether it be right to obey God or men, judge ye."

4. Be sure to keep the rank and sphere in which the General has put thee; for he is not the author of confusion, but a God of order. So soon as an army in battle begins to break rank, and to fall into disorder, it is a sign that they are worsted by the enemy; and therefore great care is taken by a skilful general, to keep the soldiers in their proper rank and order. So here, the Captain of salvation will have every one to abide in the vocation into which he is called: he will have magistrates to act under him in their sphere, ministers in theirs, and private Christians in their capacity: and if every one thus study to serve the Lord in their proper stations, the whole body shall be edified and built up, and the very women who tarry at home shall divide the spoil.

5. Whenever you find yourself distressed by the attacks of the enemy, sin, Satan, or the world, be sure to cry to your General for help; for he is on your head, and he passes on before you. This has been the practice of the followers of the Lamb in all ages of the world, Psal. xxxiv. 6: "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him; and saved him out of all his troubles." You have the orders of the General for this: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." The cry of one of his soldiers, in distress by the enemy, goes to his heart, and weakens his resentment; how much more, when the whole church of God cry together to heaven, because of the injury done to her by boars and wolves? He comes up at the cry of his poor people, when oppressed in their civil or spiritual privileges; you have a lecture to this purpose, Psal. xviii. 6: "In my distress I called upon the Lord, (*when* the floods of ungodly men made *him* afraid.") Well, the General takes the field, and see what awful work follows, ver. 7—9, and downward, when he appeared, "The earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved, and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it. He bowed the heavens also, and came down. He rode upon a cherub, and did fly. He thundered in the heavens, and the highest gave his voice. He sent out his arrows, and scattered them; and he shot out lightnings, and discomfited them. He sent from above, he took me, he drew me out of many waters."

6. *Lastly,* Never let your General's standard fall, if you can hold it up. If the ensign-bearer in time of battle be wounded or killed, and the standard fall to the ground, the soldier that is next at hand will lift it up, and carry it in his room; great care is taken to keep up the standard: so let every Christian, in this war, study to keep up the standard. Christ has lifted up his standard in Scotland, a standard of pure doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; the enemy is come in like a flood, in order to pull down the standard; some attempting to pull down the standard of doctrine, striking at the foundation God hath laid in Zion, by denying the supreme Deity of the Son of God; others are striking at the standard of government, endeavouring to introduce Episcopal, Independent, Erastian schemes; others attempting to destroy the discipline, by tyrannical usurpation upon the rights of the Lord's people, in choosing their own pastors; a whole covenanted work of reformation is struck at. Now, I say, let it be your care and concern, in your station, to lift up his standard, when others are pulling it down. Contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints, especially for the truths that are most struck at in our day: contend for the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free. And if the Spirit of the Lord has been lifting up the standard in you, and over you, at this occasion, by especial manifestations of his love, O study to maintain it, keep up a good correspondence between the Lord and you: and, for this end, beware of unbelief, pride, vanity, carnality, and every thing that may separate betwixt you and your God; and if at any time the enemy come in like a flood, and carry you off your feet, never rest till you get a new sight of the standard, and a new reading by faith of the mottoes of the standard. To conclude, whenever you find the enemy rallying his forces, and making a new attempt upon you, improve this promise by faith in prayer, *When the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him.* "Faithful is he that hath promised, he will also do it."

SERMON XXII.

THE BELIEVER'S JOURNEY FROM THE WILDERNESS OF THIS WORLD TO THE HEAVENLY CANAAN.*

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved? CANT. VIII. 5.

IN the beginning of this chapter, we find the church, under the notion of the spouse or bride, breathing after farther degrees of familiarity and fellowship with Christ, the glorious Bridegroom of souls, than she had ever yet attained to: "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breast of my mother!" Observe, They that know the Lord, will follow on to know him; they will forget things that are behind, and reach forth unto things that are before. The spouse, although she had been brought into the banqueting-house, and allowed to sit under his shadow with great delight, yet here we find her pleading for farther intimacy, renewed manifestations and discoveries of him. A believer can never be satisfied with any degree of nearness, till he come to be swallowed up in the immediate vision and fruition of him in glory. This request of the spouse she enforces with several arguments: she tells him, ver. 2, in the close, that she "would cause him to drink of her spiced wine, and the juice of her pomegranates; that is, she would entertain him with the fruits of his own Spirit, the graces of his own operation, which are the only entertainment he is delighted with, and the best that her mother's house could afford. Observe, That a believer thinks nothing too good for the entertainment of his blessed Lord; if he had ten thousand heavens of glory at his disposal, they should be all at his service: they cast their crowns down at his feet. Our blessed Lord's tender heart will not allow him to restrain or keep up himself long from the soul that is panting after nearness to him; for we find, ver. 3, he grants her suit, and allows her a renewed discovery of his tender love, insomuch that she is made to own, "His left hand is under my head, and his right hand doth embrace me." Upon which, ver. 4, she expresses her care

* Two sermons, preached upon a Thanksgiving-day, after the administration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, in the Tolbooth Church of Edinburgh, March 6, and in the Tron Church, March 7, 1732; and afterwards enlarged upon in several sermons at Stirling.

and concern to prevent any farther interruption of her fellowship and communion with her Lord, either by herself or others; "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love until he please." The daughters of Jerusalem, particular believers, being supposed to be witnesses of this blessed intimacy between Christ and the spouse, and to the actings of her faith and love upon him, they are introduced in the words of the text, expressing their wonder and satisfaction at that blessed interview between Christ and his beloved spouse, even here in a militant state: *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?*

In the words we may notice, 1. The designation given to this world, with reference to the church and people of God; it is but a *wilderness*, or a weary land, through which they are travelling toward their own home.

2. We have the course they are steering while in the wilderness; they are not sitting still in it, or going farther into it, as if it were their home; no, they are *coming up* from the wilderness: their affections are set upon things that are above, and not upon things that are below: they have got a taste of the grapes of Eshcol, they have got a view of the land afar off, and of the King in his beauty, which makes them disrelish this present world, and look and long, not for the things that are seen, but the things that are not seen, and which are eternal.

3. We have the spouse's posture as she comes up from the wilderness; she is *leaning*. Hebreans observe, that this is a word not elsewhere used in scripture; the seventy interpreters translate it *confirming*, or *strengthening* herself. It plainly supposes the spouse's weakness and impotency in herself to grapple with difficulties in her way through the wilderness, together with her dependence on the grace and furniture that was laid up for her in Christ; and that she must needs fag and fail in her journey, without new supplies and communications of light, life, and strength, from him in whom all fulness dwells.

4. We have the blessed show and prop on which she leans and rests her weary soul, in coming up from the wilderness; it is *upon her beloved*, that is, upon Christ, whose love and loveliness had ravished her heart, and drawn out her cordial assent and consent to him as the Bridegroom of souls, who had betrothed her to himself in mercy, faithfulness, and loving-kindness. It is pleasant here to observe how the heart of God the Father, and the heart of the believer, jump and centre upon Christ: "This is my beloved Son," says God the Father, "in whom I am well pleased;" he is "my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth."

And O! says the believer, as he is the Father's beloved, so he is *my beloved* too: he is just the darling and delight of my soul: "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in all the earth that I desire besides thee."

5. We have the influence or impression that this pleasant sight has upon the daughters of Jerusalem, expressed in a way of question, *Who is this?* This is not a question of ignorance, as though they wanted to be informed who the spouse was; but, (1.) it is a question of wonder. They are struck with a holy amazement at such intimacy and familiarity between parties that are at such infinite distance; that "the high and lofty One who inhabiteth eternity," should admit dust and ashes, defiled with sin, "the abominable thing that his soul hates," into such friendship and fellowship. (2.) It is not a question of contempt, but of esteem. Although believers, who are the spouse of Christ, be in themselves despicable and polluted; yet, by virtue of their relation to Christ, they are worthy of the highest esteem, being made beautiful through the comeliness that he puts upon her. (3.) It is a question of approbation and commendation. They hereby express their satisfaction with her practice, and the exercise of her faith in coming up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved, as the safest course she could take for accomplishing her journey to the Canaan that is above, through the dens of lions and mountains of leopards. Observe, That it is, and will be, the pleasure and satisfaction of a gracious soul, to see others thriving and prospering in the Lord's way, and in acquaintance with Christ even though they themselves be outstripped and darkened thereby in the world's view. The words would afford a great variety of doctrines, but I confine myself to this one:—

OBSERVE. "That it is the undoubted duty, and the laudable practice of believers, truly betrothed to Christ, to come up from the wilderness of the world, towards the land of rest and glory that is above, staying and leaning their souls upon him as their beloved." *Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?*

The doctrine being clearly founded on the words, I shall not stand on the confirmation of it; but shall, through divine assistance, endeavour to speak to it in the following method and order:—

I. Give you the characters of the soul espoused or betrothed to Christ.

II. Speak a little of the world, the place of the believer's residence, under the notion of a *wilderness*.

III. What may be the import of the spouse's *coming up* from the wilderness.

IV. Speak a little of her posture; for she comes up, *leaning upon her beloved.*

V. Inquire into the grounds and reasons of this doctrine, why the spouse of Christ comes up from the wilderness, and why she comes leaning on her beloved. And then,

VI. Apply the whole.

I. The *first* thing is, to give *you the character of a soul truly espoused to Christ.* And I shall endeavour to draw the character from the text and context.

1. Then he is one that is always breathing after more and more nearness to the Lord, and a more intimate fellowship and acquaintance with him. Hence the spouse here, ver. 1. notwithstanding of all she had found, cries out, "O that thou wert as my brother, that sucked the breasts of my mother!" Some make this to be a wish or a prayer of the Old Testament church for the actual incarnation of the Son of God. As if she had said, O that that happy day were come, when thou shalt actually become the seed of the woman, a child born to us! I think, if thou wert actually incarnate and clothed with my nature, I would not keep at such a distance, but would "enter with boldness into the holiest, through the veil of thy human nature." Whether that be in it or not, yet it is plain, that the words express a desire after more intimacy and nearness than she had yet enjoyed. Sirs, if you be espoused to Christ, whatever nearness or access you have had, you will desire more, and be ready to cry with David, Psal. xlii. 1: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God." Whenever any cloud overcasts your sky, you will be ready to say, "O that I knew where I might find him."

2. The soul espoused to Christ will not be ashamed to own him before the world; as you see in the close of verse 1. "When I should find thee without, I would kiss thee, and should not be ashamed." We are commanded to "kiss the Son, lest he be angry," Psal. ii. 12. And they that are espoused to him, kiss him with a kiss of affection and love, and with a kiss of subjection and reverence, and are not ashamed to do it before the profane carnal world, who perhaps may be ready to laugh at them for their religion; no, they will confess him, and his cause and interest, whatever be the hazard, knowing that "they who confess Christ before men," he will not be behind-hand with them, but "will confess them before his Father, and before his holy angels." Sirs, beware of suffering yourselves to be bantered or laughed out of your

religion in this degenerate day: "For he that is ashamed of me before men, of him will I be ashamed before my Father, and before his angels. Christ despised the shame and ignominy of the cross for us, and therefore let us despise the reproaches or the revilings of the world in owning him.

3. The soul that is really espoused to Christ, is heartily concerned for the good of his mother-church, and to have the Lord's gracious and sensible presence in his ordinances; that he may be a public good to others, as well as to himself. This disposition you see in the spouse here, verse 2, in the beginning, "I will bring thee into my mother's house." As if she had said, I would make it my business to have the Lord brought back to the assemblies and dwelling-places of Zion, that he might be the glory in the midst of her. Sirs, the Lord is angry with our mother at this day, he is threatening to break up house with her; there is little of God to be seen or felt in our judicatories, in our ordinances, in preaching, in hearing, in communicating; an Ichabod may be read in every corner: little of the life and power of religion is to be seen among magistrates, ministers, or people. Well, if you be espoused to Christ, you will study to wrestle, and bring him back again to your mother's house, especially when you find him in a sensible way present with your own soul; according to the practice of the spouse, Cant. iii. 4: "I found him whom my soul loveth: I held him, and would not let him go, until I had brought him into my mother's house, and into the chamber of her that conceived me."

4. The soul espoused to Christ is one that is fond of the instructions of his word and Spirit; as you see in the spouse, in the middle of verse 2. This is one of her great designs in bringing Christ into her mother's house, that so she and others might have the mysteries of the kingdom, and secrets of the covenant, and the wonders of his law, more clearly opened and unfolded. Christ is "the Son of righteousness, the light of the world; he is made of God unto us wisdom," the great prophet of the church, "the interpreter among a thousand." And when he comes to a land or place in the power of his Spirit accompanying his word, the oracles of heaven are then opened, and the mysteries of the kingdom are unveiled, the people that sat in darkness are made to see a great light. And O this is the delight and desire of every soul truly espoused to the Lord.

5. The soul espoused to Christ is one that is desirous to give him the best entertainment that it is capable to afford; as the spouse in the close of verse 2: "I would cause thee to drink of my spiced wine, and of the juice of my pomegranates." Christ entertains his spouse with "fat things full of

marrow, wines on the lees well refined;" and they that taste of this food, are so ravished with it, that they know not what requital to make him; but they would give him the best entertainment that they can imagine, if they had it.

6. The soul espoused to Christ is one that would just lie and lodge in the arms of a Redeemer: verse 3: "His left hand shall be under my head, and his right hand shall embrace me." To the same purpose is what we have, verse 6: "Set me as a seal upon thine arm." As if she had said, Let my life, my soul, be "hid with Christ in God;" let me be encircled in his everlasting arms, and the eternal God my refuge. As it is the desire of a gracious soul to have Christ lying as a bundle of myrrh between its breasts, so it cannot rest till it be in the arms and bosom of him who is in the bosom of the Father: and oh, when it comes there, the soul cries, "This is my rest: here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

7. When the soul wins to any nearness to the Lord, it is afraid of every thing that may stir up his displeasure, or provoke him to withdraw; as you see it was with the spouse, verse 4: "I charge you, O daughters of Jerusalem, that ye stir not up, nor awake my love until he please." The poor soul that is admitted to nearness to the Lord, is afraid of the least squint look to the world, self, or any of Christ's rivals; afraid of the workings of a remaining body of sin and death, pride, vanity, or any thing else that may provoke him to cover himself with a cloud in his anger. The man knows, to his sad experience, that his iniquities separate between him and his God; and therefore he watches against the least appearance of evil. O there are but few tender Christians in our day: and hence it comes that there is so little of sensible communion with the Lord: for communion with God can only be maintained in a way of holiness, and habitual tenderness of walk: Psal. xxiv. 3: "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? and who shall stand in his holy place?" verse 4: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart," &c.

8. The soul espoused to Christ is one who is bending his course heavenwards, and has his back turned upon this world as a howling wilderness. They "desire a better country, that is, a heavenly;" they are "looking for a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" and therefore they look upon this world, and the things of it, with a holy contempt and disdain; as you see in the spouse here, she is coming up from the wilderness toward the promised land of glory.

9. He is one whose life in this world is a life of faith and

dependence on Christ, as you see in the spouse here; as she travels through the wilderness, she leans on her beloved. Here "we walk by faith, not by sight: The life which I live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." But of this more afterwards. Thus I have glanced at the character of the soul espoused to Christ, as it lies in the preceding context.

II. The *second* thing was, to *take a view of the place of the present residence of the spouse of Christ;* it is a *wilderness*, a very unheartsome lodging. For,

1. You know a wilderness is a solitary place: Psal. cvii. 4; it is said there of exiles, or travellers, that "they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way." Oh what a weary solitary place is this world to God's people, especially when, to their own sense and feeling, the Lord is withdrawn from them! The whole world looks void and empty; all the riches, pleasures, relations, and comforts of time, cannot fill his room; so that they are in a manner wild, and know not what to do, or whither to turn them, when Christ is away. Hence is that of Job, chap. xxiii. 8, 9: "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him. O that I knew where I might find him!"

2. A wilderness is a misty and foggy place, where noisome steams and vapours, arising out of the earth, darken the sky; which are both prejudicial to health, and ready to lead the traveller out of his way. Such a part is this world to the Lord's people. What hellish steams and vapours are cast up by Satan, the god of this world, to bemist the traveller to glory, by which he is in danger of losing his way and spiritual health at once? Never was there an age in which such pestilential vapours of error, blasphemy, carnal policy, and profanity, more abounded, than in this day in which we live; the mouth of the bottomless pit is as it were opened, and blasphemy and errors cast up, to darken and obscure the Son of righteousness, &c.

3. A wilderness is a barren place; it affords little or nothing for the support of human life: hence it is said of the travellers in a wilderness, Psal cvii. 5, they were "hungry and thirsty, and their soul fainted in them." Such a place is this world to God's people; it is a barren land, which yields nothing but swine's husks, vanity and vexation of spirit, which the men of this world make their food, and their all: hence David complains that he was in a "dry and thirsty land, where there was no water." It is true, indeed, the

travellers to glory have their wilderness-meals, to keep in their life in their journey: but no thanks to the world for that, for the food they live upon does not come out of the earth, the wilderness of this world cannot afford it: no, but like the manna that fed Israel in the wilderness, it comes from above.

4. A wilderness is a place of danger; thieves and robbers, and beasts of prey, frequent the wilderness, by which travellers are in danger of being spoiled of their life and substance. Such a place is this world to God's people; it is called a "den of lions," and a "mountain of leopards," Cant. iv. 8. Here it is that the great Abaddon and Apollyon, the destroyer of mankind, with all his hellish legions, form their camp, watching all opportunities to devour and swallow up the traveller to glory. Hence the devil is called "the ruler of the darkness of this world," and he "goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour:" and though hell and its armies shall never so far prevail, as to keep the believer out of heaven, yet they will study to wound him, and make him go halting thither. And, sirs, you who have been at a communion-table, had need to take heed to yourselves when you go out into the wide wilderness; for I assure you, Satan will be seeking to winnow and sift you as wheat. If you be only professors, and no more, he will study to trip up your heels, and make you a scandal to religion; or if you be real believers, and have met with the Lord, the pirate will be upon you to spoil you of your lading: and therefore "be sober, be vigilant;" for you are yet within the devil's territories.

5. A wilderness is an unsettled place; many heights and hollows, turnings and windings, in a wilderness: sometimes a traveller in a wilderness will be on the top of mountains, sometimes down in the valley; sometimes his sky will be clear, and sometimes cloudy; sometimes a storm, and sometimes a calm. Just so is it in the case of the believer while here: sometimes he is on the mount of communion; at other times down in the valley of desertion: sometimes he is on mount Zion, where he enjoys a pleasant calm; at another time he is brought to mount Sinai, where a storm of the thunder of the law startles him: sometimes the "candle of the Lord shines on his head, and through the light of the Lord he walketh through darkness;" at other times he "walks in darkness, and can see no light;" so that he is made to cry, "O that it were with me as in months past!" &c.

6. Many pricking briers grow in the wilderness, many rough ways, which are uneasy to travellers. Just so here, the believer passing through the world has the rough and thorny paths of affliction to travel: "Through many tribu-

lations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven:" John xvi. 33: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." The cloud of witnesses who are now surrounding the throne, "came out of much tribulation." See what troubles they endured, Heb. xi. 36—38. Thus, you see in what respect this world, the present abode of the believer, is called a wilderness.

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to *speak a little of the course that the spouse is taking, or the quarter toward which she is bending while in the wilderness;* she is not going down, but *coming up* from the wilderness. And this, I conceive, may imply these things following:—

1. That believers, or those who have really taken Christ by the hand, have turned their back on the ways of sin, which "lead down to the chambers of death." The way of the men of this world, is a down-hill way, which is indeed easy and natural; but, like a rolling-stone upon the precipice, they roll on till they land in the bottomless gulf of eternal misery. But now the soul espoused to Christ has forsaken the down-hill way of this world, and steers a quite opposite course; they will not be conformed to the world, or the course of the world, even though the world should account them for signs and wonders, because they will not run with them unto the same excess of riot.

2. This coming up from the wilderness implies, that believers are pilgrims on the earth, and that this world is not their home. This is what David, a great king, frankly owned in the midst of his worldly wealth and grandeur, Psal. cxix. 19: "I am a stranger in the earth, hide not thy commandments from me." And this was the confession of that cloud of worthies, Heb. xi. 13: of whom the world was not worthy; they "confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

3. It implies a dissatisfaction with, and a disesteem of, this world, and all things in it; and therefore she has her back turned upon it, and her face toward a better quarter. Like the poor prodigal, he can find nothing in the far country but husks, that are only fit for swine; or, like Solomon, they see *all* here, to be but "vanity of vanities, all vanity and vexation of spirit;" and therefore they look not at the things that are seen, which are temporal and fading. Like the woman clothed with the sun, she tramples upon the moon; or, with Paul, accounts them no better than dung and loss. O sirs, whatever bulk this world, and the glaring beauty of it, may have in your eyes now, yet it will appear but a very little thing, yea, worse than nothing, when you are but one moment

on the other side of death. And therefore, O set not your hearts or eyes on that which is not; put up David's prayer, "Turn away mine eyes from beholding vanity."

4. This coming up from the wilderness implies, that though she could find no rest or quiet here, yet she expected a quiet rest on the other side, or beyond the wilderness. If she had no view of a better country, she would pitch her tent, and, with Peter, build tabernacles in the wilderness, and not come up from it. "There remaineth a rest to the people of God," Heb. iv. 9. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them." Up thy heart, believer, the day of thy complete redemption from sin and sorrow draweth nigh, thy sighs ere long will end in songs, thy labour in eternal rest, thy warfare in victory for evermore.

5. This coming up from the wilderness implies motion, and progress in her motion heavenwards. The ransomed of the Lord are looking with their faces toward Zion, and they "go from strength to strength, till they appear before God in Zion. The righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall wax stronger and stronger. The path of the just is as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Whatever length we are come in religion, we must not sit down, "as if we had attained, either were already perfect;" no, but we must "forget those things which are behind, and reach forth unto those things which are before."

6. This phrase of *coming up* from the wilderness implies, that religion is an up-hill work and way; for the spouse's way here is represented under the notion of an ascent. There are a great many hills and mountains, believer, that lie across thy way to glory: I only tell you of a few of them:—

1*st*, There is a hill of remaining ignorance that the believer has to climb, in coming up from the wilderness; for "we know but in part, and now we see darkly, as through a glass." He has got some twilight blinks of the glory of the Lord, and of the mysteries of the kingdom; but O they are so faint and languid, that he is ready to think he knows nothing at all. Hence is that complaint of holy Agur, while wrestling up this hill, Prov. xxx. 2, 3; "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy."

2*dly*, There is the hill of prevailing unbelief, which stands upon the top of the former; ignorance being the very root and foundation of unbelief. The poor believer is many a time put to a stand while climbing up this hill, as you see in that holy man, Psal. lxxvii. What but the prevalence of un-

belief made him to cry, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever? hath he forgotten to be gracious? hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" David gets such a back-set with this hill of unbelief, that he cries out, "All men are liars," the prophets of God not being excepted. Oh how much need of that caution, Heb. iii. 12: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God!"

3*dly*, A mountain of guilt casts up to the believer in his travelling through the wilderness, which sometimes seems to tumble upon him, and crush him under the weight of it. Hence David cries, "Mine iniquities are gone over mine head, as a burden too heavy for me to bear:" and at another time, Psal. xl. 12: "Innumerable evils compass me about, mine iniquities have taken hold upon me, so that I am not able to look up," &c.

4*thly*, A hill and mountain of divine hidings and withdrawings casts up in the wilderness: and this joins with the former; for it is "our iniquities that separate between us and our God, that he hides his face from us." And oh, when the believer is wrestling with this hill, he "walks in darkness, and sees no light;" which makes it exceedingly melancholy: hence says Job, "I go mourning without the sun;" and the church, Is. xlix. 14: "Zion said, The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me."

5*thly*, And while the believer is involved among the dark clouds of desertion, mountains of wrath sometimes cast up in his view; as you see in the case of Job, vi. 4: "The arrows of the Almighty are within me," &c.; and Heman, Psal. lxxxviii.: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted: Thy terrors have cut me off," &c. Sometimes a hill of strange and cloudy dispensations cast up in the wilderness, that he knows not what to make of them: God's way to him is many times "in the sea, and his paths in the mighty waters." How was Jacob overset with dark dispensations, when he is made to cry, "Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away also: me have ye bereaved of my children: all these things are against me." David, the man according to God's heart, when he took a view of that dark dispensation of the prosperity of the wicked, and adversity of the truly godly, is so overset with it, that he is at the point of giving up with religion altogether as a vain thing, Psal. lxxiii. 13: "Verily I have cleansed my heart in vain, and washed my hands in innocency."

6*thly*, Sometimes a hill of disappointments faints the believer's heart. Perhaps he was expecting a meeting with God in his ordinances, some supply, some communication of the

Spirit, some influence and watering; but alas! he finds ordinances to be dry breasts, or like the brooks of Tema where no water is: and thereupon the poor and needy soul is ready to faint, and their tongue to fail for thirst. Such a melancholy disappointment the spouse meets with, Song iii. at the beginning, "By night on my bed I sought him whom my soul loveth: I sought him, but I found him not," &c. I might tell you of the dark hills of temptation from hell, and oppression from the world, and the workings of remaining corruption; but I do not insist. Only, from what has been said, you may see, that religion is an up-hill way: they who expect to win heaven in a way of sin and sloth, will land in hell; for, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." So much for the *third* thing, what is implied in coming up from the wilderness.

IV. The *fourth* thing was, to *speak of the spouse's posture* she comes up *leaning on her beloved.* But I shall wave this at present, and only make some practical improvement of what has been said in a doctrinal way.

Use *first* of this branch of the doctrine may be of *Information*, in the few following particulars: Is it the duty and practice of believers to come up from the wilderness of this world, and to aspire after better and greater things than are here? then,

1. See, hence, the paucity of true believers who are espoused to Christ. Why, the greatest number, instead of coming up from the wilderness, are going down the wilderness: "Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." Oh what shoals of people are there in the world, "whose god is their belly, and who mind earthly things?" But how few are they who have their "affections set upon things above," and who are really pointing heavenwards? "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." The world, perhaps, may laugh at them who keep the narrow way of religion; but behold the end of the day: "The triumphing of the wicked is short, for they shall lie down in sorrow:" but as for the *righteous* and the *upright, mark* him, "for the end of that man is peace; his "weeping endures but for a night, joy shall come in the morning."

2. See hence why believers are called *men of another spirit* than the rest of the world: it is said of Caleb and Joshua,

that they were *of another spirit;* and the apostle, speaking of himself, and other believers, says, "We have not received the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." Why, here is the ground of it, other men are of a mean sordid spirit, and are content with the wilderness, and fill their belly with the husks that they find in the wilderness; but it is otherwise with the true believer, he *comes up* from the wilderness, he *seeks* and affects "those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God." The world generally have a mistaken notion of true greatness of spirit; they fondly imagine, that it lies in pushing their resentment against those who injure them, or in pushing their fortune, as they call it, in scrambling up the pinnacles of worldly honour, wisdom, riches, or preferment; whereas true greatness of spirit lies in a contempt of all these things, in comparison of things that lie beyond the wilderness; it lies in "looking not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen." O sirs, we sink our souls below their original make and excellency, when we lie down, with the serpent, to lick up the dust and vanity of this world: true greatness of spirit is, with the spouse of Christ, to soar above the world, to mount up with wings like eagles, to things calculated for the soul and its heavenly nature.

3. See hence the excellency of the Christian religion, which makes a discovery of things that lie beyond the wilderness of this world, and calls a man to *come up* from the wilderness in order to his being possessed of them. "Life and immortality are brought to light by the gospel." The Heathen philosophers had indeed some foolish guesses about another world, a life to come; but how strangely were they in the dark about it! One of the best of them, when he was dying, told his friends, 'that he was persuaded of a future state; but whether he was going to a state of happiness or misery, he did not know.' But now the Christian religion brings life and immortality (I say) to light, and opens a way and passage to a happy eternity: it is like mount Pisgah, from which one may stand and discover the goodly land that lies on the other side of Jordan. David, Psal. xvi. when he wins up to the top of it, and gets a view of the glories of heaven and eternity, he cries out like a man in a transport, "My heart is glad, and my glory rejoiceth:" Why? "Thou wilt show me the path of life: in thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore."

4. See hence a good reason why the saints express such longings to be away out of the body: "I desire to be dissolved," says Paul; "In this we groan earnestly, desiring to be

clothed upon with our house which is from heaven:" why, it is no wonder; for this world is but a wilderness to them: and how natural is it for a traveller in a wilderness to wish and long to be at home in his own country, and among his own kindred, where their inheritance lies, even, "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away?"

5. See a good reason why the saints should possess their souls in patience under all the trials of a present life. Who is it, that, travelling through a wilderness, does not lay his account with inconveniencies and difficulties? But besides, believer, thou art coming up from the wilderness, and ere long thou wilt come out of it, and beyond it altogether. "In the world," says Christ, "ye shall have tribulation;" but look beyond the wilderness to thy fellow-travellers, whose journey is ended. "What are those which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?" Rev. vii. 13. You have the answer in the verse following: "These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple." Wait a little, believer, and thou shalt be there also; and then thy present "light afflictions, which are but for a moment, shall" resolve in "a far more and exceeding and eternal weight of glory; and God shall wipe away all tears from thine eyes."

Use *second* of this doctrine may be of *Reproof.* Is it the duty of believers, and their practice, to come up from the wilderness of this world? then,

1. It reproves those who sit down in the wilderness, and take up with it as their home; like the fool we read of in the gospel, who, when he had amassed a great deal of worldly substance together, he cries, "Soul, take thine ease, thou hast much goods laid up for many years." But, sirs, read what followed in that parable of the rich fool; perhaps God may come and say, "Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" You who are perhaps "clothed in purple and fine linen, and fare sumptuously every day," and have no thoughts of another world, look to it in time, lest in a little you be weltering among purple flames, crying for a "drop of water to cool the tip of your tongue."

2. It reproves those who, instead of coming up from the wilderness, are going down the wilderness. The way of sin is said to be a downward way, and leads to *hell beneath;* and this road all the profane world are taking. You may see a roll of their names, and where their landing will be,

Rev. xxi. 8: "The fearful, and unbelieving, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars, shall have their part in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone; which is the second death."

3. It reproves those who to men would appear to be coming up from the wilderness, and yet are steering a quite other course, such as the *painted sepulchre*, who goes under a mask of religion, and yet is rotten at the root; he is going down the wilderness, instead of coming up. Christ has pronounced many heavy woes against you: and therefore "the sinners in Zion shall be afraid," &c. Again; the moralist, whose outward walk before the world perhaps is "touching the law blameless," and yet never comes to him who is "the end of the law;" your morality and civility will be found wanting a true root, not being grounded and ingrafted in Christ, of whom only our *fruit* can be "unto holiness, and the end everlasting life." The same we may say of the legalist; he is but going down the wilderness, *all* his *righteousness* will be found to be *as filthy rags;* for "by the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified." Again; the carnal gospeller, whose language is, "Let us sin, because grace doth abound." Sirs, whatever may be your evangelical notions, yet if the grace of God in the gospel do not "teach you to deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to walk soberly, righteously, and godly," you are not coming up, but going down the wilderness. Jude 4. They are ranked among the number of the "ungodly, who turn the grace of our God into lasciviousness." The secure, sleepy sinner, that was never awakened to see his danger, but is crying with the sluggard, "Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep;" you are going down the wilderness, for sudden destruction is pursuing you.

4. This doctrine reproves those who make a feint to come up from the wilderness, but immediately they turn heartless in the journey: they cry, "There is a lion in the way, a lion in the streets," and therefore turn back, and steer towards another quarter. Of this sort are all *backsliders*, who *put their hand to the plough* of religion, but *look back again*. What an awful sentence is it that God has pronounced against such, when he says, that they "shall be filled with their own ways, and be led forth with the workers of iniquity!"

5. This doctrine reproves those who hinder the spouse of Christ, or hurt her in her way, as she is coming up from the wilderness. We find the spouse frequently complaining of injuries, even from those from whom other things might have been expected; she complains that her "mother's children were angry with her," chap. i. 6: these who were mother's

children, but not father's children with her: members of the visible church, but were never born of God; they were angry with her: and with them joined the corrupt clergy of that day, and they continually abused her; hence she complains, chap. v. 7: "The watchmen that went about the city, found me, they smote me, they wounded me; the keepers of the walls took away my veil from me." They were called watchmen, and had got themselves into that office for a piece of bread: but instead of watching against the enemy, they opened the gates to the enemy, and suffered *foxes* to come in and *spoil the vines;* and instead of comforting her, and pouring in oil into her wounds, they themselves smote and wounded her, by stripping her of the sacred rights and privileges allowed her by her great Husband. Instead of drawing a veil over the infirmities and weaknesses of real believers, they studied to expose them as a company of hypocrites, and loaded them with a great deal of invidious calumnies and reproaches, that so they might with the better colour of equity harass and persecute her. The application of all these things is easy. Even in our own day, what melancholy cries and complaints are going up to heaven, through several corners of the land, to the *God of sabaoth*, the great King of Zion, against some set of men, who meet together in a judicative capacity even in this city? and I do not know but some of them may be hearing me. I shall only say, that the injured little ones of Christ will have day about with those that carry it against them now; before the whole scene be over, there will be wound for wound; *tribulation* will be rendered *unto them that trouble* the spouse of Christ; and when the reckoning comes, "the great men, and the mighty men, the man with the gold ring," who are now adored, as if they were the only persons to be owned in the planting of churches, they, and those that join hand with them in conspiring to hurt the little ones of Christ, will be "crying to the rocks and mountains to fall on them, and hide them from the face of the Lamb;" when the poor people of God, that were accounted as the "dross and off-scourings of the earth," will be sitting upon the bench with Christ, every one of them "shining forth, like the sun in the kingdom of their Father." I conclude this with a word of advice to Christ's oppressed people, and you have it, James v. 7, 8: "Be patient therefore, brethren unto the coming of the Lord. Behold, the husbandman waiteth for the precious fruit of the earth, and hath long patience for it, until he receive the early and latter rain. Be ye also patient; establish your hearts: for the coming of the Lord draweth nigh."

Use *third* of this doctrine shall be by way of *Trial* and

Examination. That which I would have you to try is, Whether are you in this world as in a wilderness, or are you in it as your home? and whether you are sitting down in the wilderness, or are you coming up from it? I am ready to think, that in these words there may be an allusion to Israel in their travelling from Egypt to Canaan: therefore with allusion to their journey toward the promised land, which was typical of the true church of God travelling through this wilderness to glory, I would, by way of trial, ask the few following questions:—

1. Has your Egyptian bondage been loosed in a day of power? Has God, as with a high hand, and stretched-out arm, brought you out from under the dominion of sin and Satan, these oppressing taskmasters? and has he made you to see these Egyptian enemies overthrown in the Red sea of the death and suffering of a glorious Redeemer, while you by the same means made your escape? This is God's way of dealing with all his own Israel; he first makes them to groan under the fears of sin and wrath, and then opens up a way for their escape by the death and blood of the Lamb. So then, has the Son of God made you free? If so, you are free indeed. But,

2. I ask, Has God ever brought you to the foot of Sinai, and discovered himself in such awful majesty, greatness, and in the holiness and severity of his law, as has persuaded you that there is no dealing with God without a mediator. The law was published at mount Sinai "because of transgression," and that it might be "a schoolmaster to lead them unto Christ." So then, I ask, if you have seen such a distance between God and you, such holiness and perfection in his law, as has made you flee to him who is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth? If so, you are indeed coming up from the wilderness towards the promised land; but, if not, it is a sign you are yet in the Egypt of a natural state.

3. Have you ever seen the tabernacle that God reared, and the glory of God in it? You know, the tabernacle in the wilderness was the symbol of God's presence among Israel, in which the law was kept; and the glory of the God of Israel was therein discovered in the view of Israel: this was a type of Christ, the true tabernacle which God has reared. Now, I say, have you seen this tabernacle, a God in Christ reconciling the world to himself? Have you seen the glory of God shining in the face of Christ, and the law magnified and made honourable in him? And are your motions through the wilderness, and your way to the land of promise, directed by viewing this tabernacle; according to that of the apostle,

Heb. xii. 1: "Let us run our race, looking unto Jesus?" And are you made to go "singing in the way of the Lord" through the wilderness, because "great is the glory of the Lord?"

4. I ask how are you fed in the wilderness? Israel in the wilderness were not fed with the fruit of the earth, but with manna rained from heaven: so God has a way of feeding his true Israel in the wilderness with the manna from heaven, Christ, the bread of life, comes down in the dispensation of the word, and they gather it by faith, and feed on it. And oh but this manna has a pleasant taste with it to the spouse of Christ coming up from the wilderness? They can say, in some measure of sincerity, with Jeremiah, "Thy word was found by me, and I did eat it, and it was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

5. Are you frequently drinking of the water of the rock? You know, there was a rock smitten, out of which streams of water issued, which followed Israel till they came to Canaan: "This rock was Christ, who being smitten with the rod of his Father's anger, refreshing streams of grace and consolations of the Spirit have issued, which make glad the city of God. Now, what experience have you as to this? Is Christ to you like "rivers of waters in a dry place?" And are you made now and then to see the accomplishment of that promise, Is. xliv. 3: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground?"

6. Have you seen the mystical brazen serpent? and have you got health conveyed to your souls by looking on it, when stung by the fiery serpent in the wilderness, or when wounded by the fiery darts of Satan? for, "as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so is the Son of man lifted up" on the pole of the everlasting gospel; "that whosoever believeth in him," or looks to him by faith, "may not perish, but have everlasting life."

7. What is it that keeps up your heart in your journey through the wilderness? If God had not made a promise of Canaan to Israel, and engaged his veracity to bear them company in their journey, they had not gone out of Egypt; and it was the faith of God's promise that spirited and enlivened them in their travels and battles. Just so is the case here; God has made a promise of life and rest on the other side of death through Christ, and that he will be their God and their guide; that his Son, the angel of his presence, shall be your leader and commander: now, if you be really coming up from the wilderness to the promised land of glory, it is the faith of God's promise that bears you up, and carries you through in your travels, and in your wilderness-work and

warfare. Hence the spouse, here, is said to come up *leaning on her beloved*, resting on the promise of a God in Christ for through-bearing, and for a comfortable landing at last.

8. What pillars of smoke are you sending up from the wilderness? The offerings of Israel in the wilderness went up to heaven like pillars of smoke towering upwards; so you will be frequently sending up the sacrifices of prayer, and of praise, and holy meditation; your affections, like the smoke of the sacrifice, will be soaring heavenwards.

9. You will be frequently casting your eyes on the promised land that lies beyond the wilderness, and longing with the church to be there: Cant. ii. 17: "Until the day break, and the shadows flee away: turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe, or a young heart upon the mountains of spices."

Use *fourth* shall be of *Exhortation*, to follow the example of the church of God here, in coming up from the wilderness towards the promised land of glory above; or, as the apostle words it, Col. iii. 1, 2: "If ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above, not on things on the earth." By way of motive, I offer these considerations:—

1. Consider what the wilderness of this world is, from which you are called to come up. Besides what was said of it in the doctrinal part, I shall add these things following, to wean your hearts and affections from it.

1*st*, This world is but the reprobate dog's portion: Psal. xvii. 14: "The men of the world, which have their portion in this life, and whose belly," &c. It was a common saying of Luther's, 'that the whole Turkish empire was but a crumb cast unto a dog.' Now, why should we cast in our lot among the dogs, who profess to be of the church of God, and the spouse of Christ?

2*dly*, This world is groaning under the curse of God: "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," said the Lord to our first parents, immediately after they had sinned. And under the weight of this curse "the whole creation groaneth, and travaileth with pain even until now." Oh who would be content to sit down where the curse of God dwells?

3*dly*, Consider, that the wilderness of this world has been a shambles, defiled with blood, with the blood of Christ, and with the blood of an innumerable company of martyrs, from which it has never been purged as yet; it may be called "Golgotha, the place of a scull; and Aceldama, a field of blood." This earth has been stained, and this land, and this city Edinburgh, in particular, have been stained with the blood of Christ mystical; and it is to be feared that the guilt

of that blood is crying to heaven, like the blood of Abel, against the land, and against the place. Now, I say, is not this sufficient to wean your hearts from the wilderness of this world, that is a field of blood, and a place of butchering and slaughter of Christ personal and mystical? The men of the world, who take up with it as their home, are just like the possessed man we read of in the gospel, lodging among tombs and sepulchres.

4thly, Consider that the wilderness of this world is just the gallery where the devil, the god of this world, that Apollyon, walks up and down, "seeking whom he may devour." Job i.—says God, "Whence comest thou Satan? I come," says Satan, "from going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it." Some think that the devil uttered these words with an air of haughtiness and pride, as if he made his vaunt before God, that he was the prince of this world, and that the kingdoms of it and their glory were his; so that the meaning of the devil's answer is, as if he had said, Why, says he, where should I be, but travelling in circuit through my own territories? Now, why should we not come up from the devil's quarters and territories? Who loves to be at home in the devil's quarters, in the very den of that lion and leopard, but only they that are his devoted slaves and vassals?

5thly, Come up from the wilderness; for it is but a mere empty shadow, and all the glory of it is but a piece of moonshine. Why should we set our hearts upon "that which is not," and which perisheth in the very using? You have seen bells of water blown up by children, sparkling with a variety of beauteous colours, but which just perish in a moment. And what is the whole visible creation that we now see, but just a great bell blown up by the breath of the Almighty? "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made: and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." It makes a gay and glorious appearance; but, alas! it is all imaginary, a mere shadow, a vapour, which appears for a little, and then vanishes. Now, who would be content with such an imaginary thing as this?

6thly, Come up from the wilderness of this world; for it is condemned to be burnt. It was a piece of madness in Lot to linger in Sodom, when he was told it was to be consumed with fire and brimstone. The same madness possesses those that will not come up from the wilderness into a place of safety, when God has told them in his infallible word, that "the day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat; the

earth also and the works that are therein shall be burnt up." Now, I say, put all these things together, and see if there be not weight in them to wean your hearts from this world, and to engage you to follow the practice of the spouse, and come up from the wilderness.

2. Consider, that there is a better country beyond the wilderness of this world. Heb. xi. it is said of the worthies, that "they desired a better country, that is, a heavenly." It is a better kingdom than the kingdoms of this world, even "an everlasting kingdom;" a better inheritance, even "an inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, which fadeth not away;" a better city, even "a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God;" a better house than our cottages of clay in the wilderness, even a house of "many mansions, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

But, more particularly, to encourage you to come up from the wilderness to this better country, consider,

1*st*, That there are better joys and pleasures to be had there than in the wilderness. This world is but at best a *Bochim*, a valley of tears, a house of mourning; but the land afar off, that lies on the other side of the wilderness, is a state of pleasure, of continual joy and pleasure, where "the ransomed of the Lord shall *have* songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall ever flee away." The joys and pleasures of this world, do not satisfy: "He that loveth silver, shall not be satisfied with silver;" hence, in the midst of their sufficiency, the covetous worldling is in wants; and in the midst of their laughter, their heart is sorrowful. But now the joys of the land of glory, are full joys: Psal. xvi. 11: "In thy presence is fulness of joy, at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." The joys of the wilderness, are transient: hence "the triumphing of the wicked is short. They take the timbrel and harp, and rejoice at the sound of the organ. They spend their days in wealth" and ease, but "in a moment they go down to the grave." But the joys of the land of glory, (as you heard just now) are everlasting, and shall run parallel with the endless ages of eternity.

2*dly*, There are better riches in the land afar off, than these that the wilderness of this world affords. As for the riches of this world, the moth and rust corrupt them, thieves break through and steal them; Solomon, who was master of more of this world's riches than any man else, pronounces them all *vanity and vexation of spirit*. But now the riches of that better country beyond the wilderness are far better, in

respect of plenty; for the riches of that land are *unsearchable*, Eph. iii. 8: better in respect of value; for the gold of that land is better than the gold of Ophir; it is "gold tried in the fire, *yea*, the gold and silver cannot equal it:" it is better in respect of perpetuity; the riches of this world make themselves wings and fly away, but the riches of glory are durable and everlasting; hence Christ exhorts to *provide* for ourselves "bags that do not wax old."

3*dly*, The honours of that better country are better than the honours of this world. What is it to sway a sceptre on earth, in respect of "ruling the nations with a rod of iron?" What is it to sit upon an earthly throne, in respect of sitting on the same throne with the Son of God? Rev. iii. at the close. What is it to be an heir of an opulent estate, or of a kingdom upon earth, in respect of being "heirs of God, and joint heirs with Jesus Christ of an inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled?" &c.

4*thly*, We invite you to come up to a far more peaceable land than is the wilderness of this world. O sirs, you and I may know to our experience, that this is a fighting world, it is a place of strife; and some may say with Jeremiah, "Wo is me, my mother, that thou hast born me a man of strife, and a man of contention to the whole earth.—Without are fightings, and within are fears.—Deep calleth unto deep, at the noise of thy water spouts." We must "run with the footmen, contend with horses," and then go down to the "swellings of Jordan." But, O sirs, come up from the wilderness: for the land beyond it is a land of peace and quiet, and everlasting rest; and this rest remaineth for the people of God, where wars and jars, and contentions and strifes, shall come to an eternal end: "They shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness."

5*thly*, That land beyond the wilderness is a far more pure and holy land than this wilderness is. This world cannot be your rest, for it is polluted; the inhabitants of it are of polluted lips, lives, and hearts; and it is hard for a man to keep his garments clean, as he is travelling through it to eternity. But that land of glory beyond the wilderness is *the holy land*, in the most proper sense; for "there can in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." All the inhabitants are such as have "washed their hands in innocence, washed their garments, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

6*thly*, That land that lies beyond the wilderness is a far more durable land than this is. This world is subject to in-

numerable vicissitudes and sorrows; a fertile land may be turned unto barrenness, a peaceable land may soon be turned to confusion; the "confused noise of the warrior, and garments rolled in blood," may be seen and heard in it; and ere it be long, the whole visible frame of nature will be unhinged, &c. But now heaven is an abiding country, an abiding city; it "hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." The city of the new Jerusalem is built *four square*, to show the stability of it; it *fadeth not away*, and the inhabitants of it *shall go no more out*, &c. O then be persuaded to come up from the wilderness to this better country, the proper country of the saints.

3. Consider, by way of motive, what a lightsome way is opened from the wilderness to that better country that is above; and let this invite you to come up. The way to heaven, after the breach of the first covenant, was blocked up by the law and justice of God; the offended majesty of heaven had rolled mountains of fiery vengeance in man's way to heaven; the cherubim with his "flaming sword, turning every way," rendered it altogether impassable. But O thanks to the glorious Emmanuel, who, as the "breaker, *has* gone up before us;" he has rolled these mountains out of the way, he has opened up the passage from the wilderness to Canaan by his death and blood; yea, he, as our King, Captain, and General, has *gone before us*, JEHOVAH is *on the head of* the travellers to glory: and therefore be encouraged to come up from the wilderness, set your faces toward Zion. And, to encourage you, I will give you a few qualities of the way you have to travel.

1st, It is a *new* way, Heb. x. 20. Adam's way in innocence by the works of the law is abolished; but here, by the gospel, there is a new way opened; a way that is calculated, not for a righteous or innocent person, but for a sinner, a lost sinner: and Christ "calls not the righteous, but *lost* sinners" of Adam's family, to take this way. And then it is new, because it never waxes stale, will never be out of request.

2dly, The way to that better land is a *living* way, not only because it leads to everlasting life, but a living Christ is the way; and so soon as ever a sinner sets the foot of faith on this way, he begins to live a life of justification, a life of sanctification, a life of consolation; for "he that hath the Son, hath life; and whoever believes in" the name of Christ, "though he were dead, yet shall he live, and shall never come into condemnation."

3dly, The way to glory is *consecrated for us;* the great God has opened and devoted this way for the travellers to glory.

The revelation of it is to us, and the revelation from him to walk in it is to us. Oh then, let us come up from the wilderness, since God had a view to your salvation in opening it.

4thly, The way is a *free* way; it is free to all comers; it is like the king's high-way, that every man has a privilege to walk in: "Whosoever will, let him come and take the water of life freely." And then it is free, in regard that the traveller has his charges borne, and every thing needful for carrying him on laid to his hand, "without money and without price," all fulness is in the way, and "out of *this* fulness we all do receive and grace for grace.

5thly, It is a *cleanly* and a *holy* way: Is. xxxv. 8: "A high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it." The way of believing in Christ, as it is the first and fundamental act of obedience to the law of God, so it is a spring of holiness and obedience to all the other commands of God; hence all true obedience is called *the obedience of faith*. The man that is heartily engaged in the way of believing, has his "heart sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body washed with pure water;" and his daily work is to cleanse himself from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord."

6thly, It is a *safe* way, in which you come up from the wilderness; for "the wayfaring man, though a fool, shall not err therein. Though he may fall, yet he shall arise; for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." The Lord is the man's *strength*; and therefore "he shall hold on his way, and wax stronger and stronger," till he come to Zion.

7thly, It is a *pleasant* way: Prov. iii. 17: "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." And how can it be but pleasant? for here is every thing needful to the traveller. Here is meat for the hungry traveller: "I am the bread of life." Here is drink for the thirsty, even "the water of life, issuing from the throne of God and of the Lamb." Here is clothing, yea, "white raiment," and the "garment of salvation," for the naked soul. Here is light to the soul in darkness: "The Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." Here is a shadowy rest to the traveller when he is weary: "I sat down under his shadow with great delight. The Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day; nor the moon by night." Here in this way you have a good guide to lead you, one who "leads the blind in the way they know not," and who at every turn is crying, "This is the way, walk ye in it." And that which contributes much to render it pleasant is, that the way is well beaten, it is a trodden path, and

you have a whole cloud, an innumerable company of travellers, both going before you, and coming after you, and going along with you: Heb. xii. 1: "Wherefore, seeing we are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us run the race," &c.

8*thly*, The way that comes up from the wilderness to the land of glory is a *peaceable* and a *quiet* way. There is nothing but noise and din, and perpetual disturbance in the ways of sin, and the way of the men of this world. But oh! there is perfect peace in this way that leads to Zion: Is. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Indeed, you may and will have disturbances from without, "In the world ye shall have tribulation;" but all the noise and disturbances from without cannot mar the quiet the soul has within; no, no; "In me ye shall have peace: be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." Thus you see, that every thing invites you to come up from the wilderness towards that better country that is above.

I shall conclude this exhortation with a few words by way of counsel and advice. If after all that has been said, you have a mind to come up from the wilderness towards the land of glory above, then take the few following advices:—

1. Keep your eyes fixed, as you come up from the wilderness, upon an invisible God, on the glorious Emmanuel, upon the unerring rule of the word, upon a well-ordered covenant, upon the cloud of witnesses that have gone before you, and on the glorious land that lies on the other side of the wilderness.

2. Another advice I give you is, If you would make your journey comfortable, or ever arrive at the end of it, study to keep in with these three:—

1*st*, Keep in with God; do nothing that may provoke him to hide his face; for if you do, it will cost you dear: you will walk in darkness through the wilderness. But oh, "in his favour is life;" every blink of his countenance exhilarates the spirits, and then "the joy of the Lord is the soul's strength," &c.

2*dly*, Keep in with conscience: "This is our rejoicing, the testimony of a good conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world," &c.

3*dly*, Keep in with them that fear God, and cleave to the word of his testimony; keep close with your fellow-travellers that are bound for Zion. "My delight," says David, is with the saints, the excellent ones of the earth," &c.

3. There are some things that you should endeavour to keep

under your foot, if you would come up from the wilderness to the heavenly Canaan.

1*st*, The *moon* of this world, Rev. xii. 1. If it be got into your head and heart, it will be sure to turn you out of the way; for "the friendship of this world is enmity with God: If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him."

2*dly*, Carnal policy and wisdom; for the wisdom of this world is but folly to God. Paul, "whenever it pleased God to reveal his Son in him, immediately he consults not with flesh and blood." It is said of Babylon, that her wisdom and understanding *perverted* her; especially it perverts us in the things of Christ, and is like to ruin the interests of Christ in the land at this day.

3*dly*, Self-righteousness, let that be kept under your feet; for this ruined the poor Jews, and brought on a sentence of excommunication upon them, by which they were cast out of the church of God: "They went about to establish their own righteousness, and would not submit unto the righteousness of God;" and so Christ himself became a *stumbling-stone*, and a *rock of offence*.

4*thly*, Keep the lust and corruption of the heart under your feet. This will keep you in continual work; for "the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Paul had much ado with a body of sin and death, Rom. vii. We must "crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts thereof." If *we* live after the flesh, *we* shall die; but if *we* through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, *we* shall live."

5*thly*, Keep at a distance from the infection of bad company. Say, with Jacob, "O my soul come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour be not thou united; *for* evil communications corrupt good manners."

The *last* advice I give is, to follow the example of the spouse here in the text, to *come up from the wilderness, leaning on the beloved*, living a life of faith on the Son of God. But this leads to the *second* branch of the doctrine.

THE BELIEVER'S JOURNEY FROM THE WILDERNESS OF THIS WORLD TO THE HEAVENLY CANAAN.*

Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?—CANT. VIII. 5.

THE doctrine insisted upon from these words at another occasion was, *That it is the commendable practice of a soul truly espoused to Christ, to come up from the wilderness of this world, towards the land of rest and glory above, staying and resting themselves upon him as their Beloved.*

Here I endeavoured,

I. To give the character of a soul truly espoused to Christ, drawn from the context.

II. I spake of this world, under the notion of a *wilderness.*

III. Showed what is imported in the spouse's *coming up* from the wilderness.

These particulars, I say, were discoursed, and this first branch of the doctrine applied in several uses; the reasons of this branch of the doctrine being adduced in the application, by way of motive to persuade sinners to turn their back on the wilderness, and to come up towards the promised Canaan above.

IV. I proceed now to the *second* branch of the text and doctrine, which was the *fourth* thing in the method: namely, to *speak a little of the spouse's posture in coming up from the wilderness;* she comes *leaning on her beloved.* It is the life of faith upon the Son of God that is here intended. And this expression of faith implies these particulars following:—

1. The spouse's weakness and inability in herself to grapple with the difficulties of her way through the wilderness; that she could never surmount them by the strength of natural, or yet of any created grace in her. Man in his natural state is *wholly without strength;* so disabled by the fall, that he has no power for any thing that is spiritually good: yea, believers themselves, though they have received a new stock

* The substance of some discourses upon the same text, preached at Stirling.

of supernatural grace, yet this inherent grace of theirs is such a feeble creature, and the opposition it meets with from corruption within, and temptation and affliction without, is so strong, that it could never bear the believer through his wilderness work and warfare, without continual supplies of strength from the glorious Head, in whom dwells all fulness of grace and truth, of merit and spirit. Hence Paul, though he had received a very large measure of grace from Christ, yet declares that he was not *sufficient of* himself *to think as of* himself, *but* his *sufficiency* and ability was *of the Lord.* So, whenever a believer begins to think that his mountain stands strong through the strength of any grace he has received, presently the Lord withdraws the influence, and suffers him to find his weakness and inability, that he may not trust in himself, but in him who is "the strength of Israel." And therefore,

2. The expression of *leaning on her beloved,* implies that however weak and insufficient she was in herself, yet there was almighty strength in her Husband and Head, on whom she leaned. Christ is the "strength of the poor and needy in their distress; *he* is the glory of *their* strength, the power of God, the man of his right hand, whom he hath made strong for" the designs of his glory in our salvation. "I have laid help," says the Lord, "upon one who is mighty." The arm of JEHOVAH is through him reached forth to help, and strengthen, and uphold the believer in his wilderness difficulties; and therefore he goes in this his might, saying, with Paul, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

3. This leaning on her beloved implies a blessed knowledge or acquaintance with the Lord Jesus. She had got a saving discovery of him by the word and Spirit of the Lord, which induced her to lean upon him; for we do not use to lean upon an utter stranger, of whom we have no knowledge. The foundation of faith is laid in knowledge, not simply in a head-knowledge attained by external revelation, for there are many learned unbelievers; but in a heart-knowledge. "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ," is made to "shine into the heart;" and this is the very beginning of wisdom; hence Paul describes his first conversion by it, Gal. i: "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me." And the promise of faith, that radical grace, is expressed by knowledge: "I will give them a heart to know me, that I am the Lord.—They shall know, and follow on to know" him, till they arrive at a mid-day vision and fruition of him in glory.

4. The expression implies, not only knowledge, but intimacy and familiarity: for we use to lean upon them with whom

we are intimately acquainted. "Truly," says the apostle John, "our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." The whole book of the Song is designed to describe this fellowship between Christ and the believing soul: they who know it in an experimental way, will be ready to say, with the spouse, "His left hand *was* under my head, and his right hand *did* embrace me: he brought me to his banqueting house, and his banner over me was love." There is more real pleasure and satisfaction in one moment of fellowship with the Lord, than in all the pleasures of sin, which are but for a season: hence David, Psal. lxxxiv. 10: "One day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness."

5. This leaning posture implies Christ's nearness to the spouse; for we cannot well lean upon a person that is at a distance. True, indeed, Christ was at a great distance from the spouse as to his corporeal presence, for he was not yet come in the flesh; and now, under the New Testament dispensation, he is gone within the veil, and the *heavens* are to "contain him until the time of the restitution of all things." But yet faith has a way of bringing Christ near, and of taking him up in the word of promise, and so leaning on him by virtue of his word. And therefore, "say not in thine heart, Who shall bring Christ down from above? *for* the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach." Sirs, though Christ be ascended as to his human nature far above all heavens, yet he is as much present to faith, as though his body were still upon earth; "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world:" and, accordingly, faith eyeing him in the word of faith, leans on him, as one that is not afar off, but near at hand.

6. It implies a trusting, resting, or recumbency of her soul upon him, under all her weights and burdens, which she rolls over on Christ: Psal. lv. 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." Matth. xi. 28: "Come unto me, all ye that labour, and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest unto your souls." Psal. xxxvii. 7: "Rest in the Lord, and wait patiently for him." As the feeble wife leans on her husband, or the weak child on its parent, with confidence that he will support him; so the believing soul leans or rests on Christ, with a persuasion of support and through-bearing; that according to his promise, he will *strengthen*, *help*, and *uphold* to the end, "with the right-hand of his righteousness."

7. It implies, that there is something in Christ that the

hand or arm of faith stays and leans upon, as we come up from the wilderness. Sometimes faith stays itself on the person of Christ, as he is "Emmanuel, God with us;" sometimes upon his love, which passeth knowledge, Psal. xxxvi. 7; "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the children of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wing." Sometimes it stays itself upon his name; for "they that know *his* name will put their trust in him:" sometimes on his mission, as the "sent of God, *the great* Apostle of our profession;" it takes him up as God's legate, his ambassador-extraordinary, sent to seek and to save that which was lost. It leans upon his general office as *Mediator*, for peace and reconciliation with God; upon his *prophetical* office, for instruction and illumination in the knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom; upon his *priestly* office, for reconciliation and acceptance; upon his *regal* or *kingly* office, for sanctification and deliverance from the power of sin and Satan. It leans upon his fulness for a supply of all wants, believing that that fulness of grace that is in him is to be communicated; for "he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among us." It sometimes leans upon the relations that Christ is come under to his people in the word, as a *friend*, a *counsellor*, a *physician*, a *leader* and *commander*. You see here, that the spouse comes up from the wilderness leaning on him in the relation of a *bridegroom* and *husband*. But of these things I may discourse more fully in the application.

I should next give the *reasons* of this branch of the doctrine, why it is that the believer comes up from the wilderness leaning on her beloved; but, as I did in the former branch, I shall improve them as motives to enforce the exhortation which I have in view from this branch of the doctrine.

And the *Exhortation* is, to follow the commendable practice of the spouse, in coming up from the wilderness of this world, towards the land of glory, leaning on him as your beloved: or, which is the same thing, in other words, Study, while you are travellers on the earth, to live by faith on the Son of God. This was the practice of Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, Gal. ii. 20: "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." This was the practice of that cloud of witnesses who have travelled to glory before us, Heb. xi. 13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them,

and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."

But now, in pursuing this exhortation a little, I shall,

1. Endeavour to illustrate and clear it, in answering a few questions.

2. Enforce it with a few motives.

3. Conclude with a few directions.

I. I would illustrate this exhortation, by answering a few questions. And

The *first* question which may be offered is this: You exhort us to a life of faith on Christ; but pray tell us, in the first place, what is it to live upon him by faith, and what influence faith has upon our journey while in the wilderness?

This question was in some measure answered already, in giving the import of the expression in the text, the spouse's leaning on her beloved. I shall farther add, that this life of faith, does not lie in one single act of believing, but in the continuation of faith or believing through the whole course of your life in the world: "The life I live in the flesh," that is, while I am in the body, "is by faith on the Son of God." Some are ready to imagine, that, when they have once believed in Christ, they have no more to do but to look back on their first closing with Christ; and upon that act of faith they rest, as their security for life and salvation, without any great concern to repeat and renew it. I am afraid if this be your way of doing, you are yet strangers both to faith in the first and after actings of it. Men are called believers, not because they have put forth one single act of faith, but because they are or should be continually believing. It is true, the first act of faith ties the knot between Christ and the soul, that shall never be loosed through eternity; but where this act of faith has been exerted, there will be frequent attempts towards the repetition of it. Faith is called an "eating the flesh, and drinking the blood of the Son of man." Now, you know, it is not a man's taking one single meal in his whole life that will subsist his body, but he must be eating and drinking every day, and frequently through the day; otherwise his natural life would soon languish: so here, there must be a continual feeding upon the incarnation and satisfaction of Christ, in order to the preservation and maintenance of the spiritual life of the soul; the life of the soul can no more be maintained by one act of faith, than the life of the body can be maintained by one meal for any long space of time. Faith is called a "drawing water out of the wells of salvation," Is. xii. 3. It will not do our business to come once to the well, the water in the cistern will soon be spent; and

therefore we must be daily coming back to the fountain for new water: so here, the life of faith is a continual coming to Christ, and a "receiving out of his fulness grace for grace." Grace received into the vessel of the soul will, like water, soon stagnate by reason of the corruption of the vessel, and it will soon be spent; what we get this day will not serve us the next: and therefore there must be a continual application to him for new supply, a continued drawing "water out of the wells of salvation." The branches live every day upon their root; the branches draw, and the root communicates sap to them for their nourishment and growth: so here, "As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine: no more can ye," says Christ, "except ye abide in me." This continued believing in Christ is called (Col. ii. 19,) a "holding the head, from which the whole body, as by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." The members of the natural body, are continually receiving life, and spirit, and conduct, from their head; so, by the faith of God's operation by which we are united to Christ, we are continually receiving that grace and fulness that is in him, "till we come unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." And this is the life of faith that I exhort you to, in order to your comfortable journey through the wilderness of this world.

There are two ways by which your life will be maintained and nourished from Christ through eternity; one in this world, and another in the world to come. So long as we are in this world, we are like children in the mother's womb, entirely nourished and maintained by faith, (like the string by which the unborn infant is nourished in the mother,) which sucks in the life, righteousness, and fulness of Christ into the soul: but no sooner do we pass out of this world into the life of glory, but the string of faith is cut, and then we come to be nourished another way, namely, by immediate vision of the Lord. As the child is nourished in the womb till it is fully ripe for the birth; so faith nourishes the soul till it be fully ripe for glory; and then faith is turned into full fruition, and immediate enjoyment.

To illustrate this matter, I shall in a few particulars show the influence that faith has through the whole of the Christian's work and warfare in the wilderness, from first to last.

1. It is faith that gives the soul the first sight of Christ, and of the way of salvation through him; it is the eye that first spies him out, as the all-sufficient Saviour provided by God the Father. When the poor soul has been as it were beaten, battered, and tossed among the waves and tempests of law-terrors, and apprehensions of eternal wrath and ven-

geance, in which case it has been as it were casting its most valuable goods overboard, its own righteousness, morality, civility, its duties, abilities, legal attainments, and every thing else: now, while the soul is in this condition, every moment expecting to be swallowed up in the great deeps of the sea of God's wrath, faith as it were steps up to the top of the mast, and gets a view of Christ, and of salvation in him; and thereupon the poor soul cries out, Oh there is Christ, let me get aboard of him; Oh there is the rock of ages, I will venture my all upon him; Oh there is a strong hold and a refuge, I will flee in unto him; Oh "this is my rest, here will I dwell, for my soul desires it." Thus, I say, it is by faith that we first enter into a state of grace, peace, and righteousness; according to that word of the apostle, Rom. v. 2: "We have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand." When the soul was surrounded with nothing but the black thoughts of despair and ruin, faith lands the soul in a safe harbour: therefore "he that hath believed" is said to have "entered into his rest," Heb. iv.

2. It is by faith that the union is made up between Christ and us. Indeed there is a radical union that we have with Christ before faith; for he takes hold of us first by his Spirit, before we take hold of him by faith; but yet the union is made up on our part by faith; it is that which ties the marriage knot. It is not love, but consent, that makes marriage between man and woman: so here, it is the soul's coming off from the law, and all other husbands; its coming off from its own righteousness, and submitting to Christ as a Saviour, a Husband, and a Surety; this is it that makes up the union, and this is done by faith. There are two things that marry Christ and the soul together, as is plain from Hos. ii. 19, 20. The first is on God's part; he says to us in the covenant, and by his Spirit, "I will betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and in loving-kindness:" there, I say, is God's part. But what is it on our part that makes the marriage? It follows, "and thou shalt know the Lord," that is, thou shalt believe in him; for this is the way that faith is very commonly expressed by in the Old Testament; namely, by the knowledge of the Lord. It is faith that brings Christ to the heart, and reveals him to the soul in all his glory and excellency.

3. As union, so our communion with Christ is by faith. There are two things requisite in order to our having fellowship with another; the first is, to make the person real and present; and the second is, to have a familiar access with boldness unto him. Now, it is faith that does both these. (1.) It is faith that makes God in Christ present to the soul: for it "sees him who is invisible:" yea, it brings Christ and God in

him, down from heaven unto the heart; hence Christ is said to "dwell in our hearts by faith." It is not love that can make another person present; it may, indeed, set the fancy at work to frame the picture and image of the person beloved; but it is only faith that can view God in Christ as present in and with the soul. And then, (2.) It is faith that gives us familiarity and boldness of access to the Lord: Eph. iii. 12: "In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." And, 2 Cor. iii. 18: "Beholding him with open face," we come to him; "with open face," that is, with confidence and boldness: Psal. xxxiv. 5: "They looked unto him, and were lightened:" and what follows? "Their faces were not ashamed;" that is, when they viewed Christ by faith, they had boldness of access to God in him. The communion that we have with Christ is frequently compared to eating and drinking, John vi. because it is faith alone that fetches nourishment from Christ, and makes a person to find the sweetness that is in him, and draws virtue from him: and thus it has the most close and intimate union and communion with him, insomuch that he is one with the soul, and the soul one with him.

4. As faith brings us into union and communion with Christ, so faith brings the Spirit of God down into the heart. I own indeed, that, in the work of regeneration and conversion, he is like the rain, that "waits not for the sons of men;" he comes unsent for, or unsought for; "he is found of them that seek him not;" faith has no instrumentality there; faith itself is a part of the new creature, that is formed by the hand of the Spirit. But, I say, faith brings the Spirit into the heart, as a Spirit of sanctification, and of consolation, Eph. i. 13: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Gal. iii. 14, we are said to "receive the promise of the Holy Spirit through faith." All the fulness of the Spirit dwells in Christ, for the use of his mystical body; now, it is by faith that this fulness is received, even grace for grace.

5. I might tell you, farther, that our standing in a state of grace is by faith. As we have access or entrance into a state of grace, so we have standing in that state by faith, Rom. v. 2; 2 Cor. i. ult. "By faith ye stand." 1 Pet. i. 5, we are said to be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." There you see, that faith is joined in commission with the power of God, to keep the believer. Does the power of God keep you? so does faith. God is not shy of ascribing that to faith, which is peculiar only to himself, because faith ascribes all to the power of God, and gives him the honour of every thing that it does: hence we are said to

be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." When other graces, such as love, repentance, &c. fag and fail, and have as it were their heels tripped up, faith will stand its ground: hence, Eph. vi. 16, there is a particular mark of distinction put upon faith beyond all the other pieces of armour; "Above all, take the shield of faith." When a man's head-piece is cracked, his sword, his breastplate, and other armour is taken from him; yet his shield will do him good service, he will lie under it, and thereby defend himself against all the strokes and blows that are levelled at him. Let the devil, corruption, and hell, rage and roar as they will, yet faith will keep its gripe, and maintain its ground: let Satan cast his fiery darts, faith quenches them, Eph. vi. 16: let indwelling sin roar and rage, faith will say, Let it rage, yet it shall never reign; for God has said, that "sin shall not have dominion:" yea, let God himself carry as an enemy, and set himself in battle-array against the soul; yet even then faith will look in his face, and say, "Though thou shouldst even kill me, yet will I trust in thee," Job xiii. 15. When other graces are fainting, and crying, "We know not what to do;" faith will say, "Mine eyes are toward thee: I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me: Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me," &c. When other graces, like poor faint-hearted things, stand as it were trembling, and crying, "Who shall deliver us?" faith will lift up the head, and cry, "Thanks be to God, which giveth *me* the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

6. It is faith that fetches in peace and quiet to the soul in the midst of trouble, whether from without or from within. When nothing but storms from heaven, earth, and hell, are blowing on the soul, faith will cast out its anchor of hope, and keep the soul steady and quiet, saying with David, Psal. xlii. 11: "Why art thou cast down, O my soul! and why art thou disquieted within me? hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him." To the same purpose is that famous text, Is. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." And how is the mind stayed on the Lord but by faith? Oh, says faith, let me have what *tribulation* I will "in the world, yet in Christ I shall have peace.—This man shall be *my* peace, when the Assyrian comes into the land."

7. Faith not only brings peace, but joy into the soul, amidst all other disturbances from without: hence we are said to be *filled with joy*, as well as *peace, in believing*. And, 1 Pet. i. 8: "Whom having not seen, *we* love; in whom though now *we* see him not, yet believing, *we* rejoice with joy unspeakable,

and full of glory." The language of faith is, (Psal. xlvi. at the beginning,) "God is our refuge and strength: and, therefore, though the mountains should be removed, yet there is a river, the streams whereof do make glad the city of God."

8. It is by faith that we are recovered after falls into sin. Many a time the devil, the world, temptation, and corruption, so far prevail against the believer, as to trip up his heels: "The righteous man falleth seven times a day." Now, in such a case, what is it that recovers him? It is faith: "Though I fall, I shall arise," says faith; "for the Lord upholdeth me with his hand." Oh, sirs, if you let faith go, when you fall into sin, you cannot miss to fall into the bottom; just like a man climbing up a ladder, if his foot slip, and he quit the gripe of his hand also, what can hinder him from falling down to the ground? When Christ foresaw that Peter would sin by denying him, what said he? "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not." As if he had said, I plainly see that thou wilt deny me in the hour of temptation; but I have prayed that thy faith may not fail, and this is the thing that will recover thee. Oh, sirs, when you fall into any sin, study to renew the acts of faith on the Lord Jesus Christ; according to that advice of the apostle, 1 John ii. 1, 2: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father." As if he had said, The only way for a fallen saint to recover himself, is by faith to go to Christ as the great Advocate and Propitiation.

9. I might tell you, farther, that faith is, as it were, the mother-grace, the radical grace, on which all the other graces of the Spirit depend. If faith be lively, so will all the other graces be; if faith be languid and faint, so will all the other graces be. If faith be set at work, it will work by love, that celestial fire will burn, the fountain of holy sorrow will flow; "They shall look upon him whom they have pierced, and mourn;" the foot of obedience will be active to run "the way of God's commandments."

10. Faith carries the soul on high, above time and time's enjoyments; it "mounts up with wings as eagles." It carries the soul to mount Nebo and Pisgah, and gives the soul a view of the goodly mountain, even Lebanon; and then the believer is like the "woman clothed with the sun, having the moon under her feet."

To conclude, as it is by faith that you must live, so it is by faith you must die, and shoot the gulf comfortably. It is said of the worthies, Heb. xi. "All these died in faith." Faith as it were lays its head in Christ's bosom, and says, with a holy confidence, "Into thy hand, O Lord, I commend my spirit." Faith, leaning on the staff of the divine promise, can say

with David, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff shall comfort me," Psal. xxiii. 4.

A *second* question that may be moved for clearing this exhortation is, What is it in Christ that faith lives and leans upon, in its passage through the wilderness?

Answ. Christ is such a suitable good, that there is no case the soul can be into in its wilderness-condition, but faith will always find something corresponding to its necessity in him. Is the soul in darkness? He is "the Son of Righteousness, the bright and Morning Star." Is the soul in danger? He is "a shield, a hiding-place, and refuge." Is the soul in trouble? He is *a rest* to the weary, he is "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land;" he is *bread* to the hungry, *drink* to the thirsty soul. But, more particularly, there are these things following in Christ, that faith lives upon in the wilderness, and which it finds like marrow and fatness to the soul.

1. Faith lives and leans upon the *name* of Christ; for "his name is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee, and are safe:" hence we are so frequently exhorted to trust in the name of the Lord." O, he has a great name, and a pleasant name, "a name above every name, and at his name every knee shall bow." Whenever a believer engages with work, he is to do it in the name of the Lord; "Whatsoever ye do in word or in deed," says the apostle, "do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, to the glory of God by him." And whenever we go a warfare against sin, Satan, or the world, we are to do it in his name; otherwise we can never prosper. This was the way of the church: "We will be joyful in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners. Whenever we go to God in prayer, we are to present our persons and petitions in the name of Christ: "Whatsoever ye ask the Father in my name, he will do it." Oh, sirs, the name of Christ works wonders, when it is managed in a way of believing. When the disciples or apostles went forth and preached the gospel among the nations, they went forth in the name of JESUS; and when they wrought miracles, they did it in the name of JESUS CHRIST: Acts iii.: "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk," said Peter and John to the cripple-man; and presently he arose. God is so delighted with the name of Christ, that for the sake of that name he will do any thing to us or for us. And therefore let us live by faith, and lean upon his name, as we come up out of the wilderness.

2. Faith lives upon the *flesh* of Christ, that is, upon the human nature as it stands personally united to the divine: "My flesh is meat indeed." You know, Israel in their tra-

vels through the wilderness to Canaan, which was a shadow or type of our travels through this world to glory, lived upon the manna that was rained from heaven upon the camp. But, O sirs, that was but a shadow of the true bread of life, an incarnate God, that we present to you in this gospel, John vi. 32: "My Father giveth you the true bread which is from heaven." And again, says Christ, in that same chapter, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you." This seems to be a hard saying to a blind carnal world, and they are ready to think or say, with these Jews, John vi. 52: "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" But whatever you may think of it, the flesh of Christ, or his human nature, as it stands united to the divine in the person of the Son, when taken up by faith in the light of the word and Spirit, is the sweetest meal and banquet to a believer in heaven or earth: no meat or drink like it to a poor perishing soul: and a believer, in travelling through the wildnerness, is always taking a look of an incarnate Deity; and thus he is enlightened, strengthened, quickened, and comforted. O, sirs, what think you of this food? I am sure if ever you tasted of it, you will be ready to say, it is like "wines on the lees well refined, and fat things full of marrow."

3. Faith lives in the wilderness, not only on the flesh of Christ, or the mysteries of his incarnation, but upon the *blood* of Christ; by which I understand his satisfaction, which is frequently in scripture expressed by his blood: "Behold the blood of the covenant;" that is, the satisfaction or death of Christ, that whereby the covenant is confirmed. This is *drink indeed* to the believer, in passing through the wilderness; let the believer get a draught of this red wine of the blood of the slain Lamb of God, he is able to go forth like a giant, or a strong man, to encounter all the powers of hell. Rev. xii. 11, it is said of the saints in their wars with the devil, that "they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," that is, by faith's improvement of the death and satisfaction of Christ. Let faith be but set a-work upon the death and blood of Christ, it can look himself in the face with an undaunted boldness, without fear of danger, or without fear of being rejected: "Having, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, let us draw near, in full assurance of faith," &c. Let faith act on the blood of Christ, it can go to God in prayer, and ask any thing that lies within the compass of the whole testament of Christ; for whatever is in the testament, is the purchase of his blood. O, will faith say, give me peace, give me pardon, give me light, life,

strength, grace, or glory, give me the Spirit; for here is the blood of the Lamb that bought it. Let faith be acted on this blood, and the man dare, with courage, comfort, and joy, look death, eternity, and a tribunal, in the face: Why? Because faith sees the curse of the law abolished, death unstinged, the grave vanquished, and a tribunal sprinkled by the blood of Jesus. The gates of glory are opened to receive the soul that is sprinkled by the hyssop of faith dipped in the blood of the Lamb.

4. Faith lives in the wilderness upon the *life* of Christ: "Because I live, ye shall live also.—I live," says Paul; "yet not I, but Christ liveth in me;" and then follows, "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Faith's way is to follow Christ from his birth to his cross, from his cross to his grave, and from his grave to his life again; and then it cries in a way of triumph, "He who was dead is now alive, and lives for evermore: I know that my Redeemer liveth;" and he lives as my head, my representative, my husband, my advocate, my king, my priest, my prophet, and my all and in all. O, sirs, the resurrection of Christ unto life, never to die any more, is a sweet and pleasant banquet in the wilderness, by which we are "begotten again unto a lively hope of the inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled."

5. Faith lives upon the *advocacy* and *intercession* of Christ: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, who makes intercession for the transgressors." And O how sweetly does the soul feed here by faith: O, will the soul say, I may be condemned by the world, or by the law, or by conscience; yet I know that I shall carry the day in the court of heaven, because my Advocate is the Lamb in the midst of the throne: he never lost a cause; he has the Father's ear; he has such interest and moyen in heaven, that all power in heaven is his, and his will is a law in the higher court. "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am," &c.

6. Faith lives upon the *word* of Christ as it comes up from the wilderness. Christ has passed his word in his testament, and he has it sealed with his blood, and he lives as the executor of his testament: and I know, will faith be ready to say, that the Spirit of Christ will take all that is in his testament, and show it unto me, and show it so as to make all the testament and latter-will effectual: and therefore *in his word do I hope;* his promise is not *yea and nay*, but it is always *yea and amen in him.* Oh when faith gets the word of promise, the confirmed testament of Christ in its hand, how will it go to God, and crave the fulfilling of the latter-will of his own Son,

saying with David, "Remember the word upon which thou hast caused me to hope!"

7. Faith lives and leans on the *righteousness* of Christ, particularly in the matter of justification and acceptance; it casts away all the works of the law like dung and loss, saying, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness and strength."

8. Faith leans on the *fulness* of Christ, and says, "Out of his fulness do all we receive, and grace for grace:" My wants are great, I am just made up of wants; but O, what wants will not the all-fulness of the Godhead dwelling in Christ supply? for he *fills all in all.* What is my poor empty vessel to that ocean that is in him? I will go with confidence, for that fulness is in him for my use; for "he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious."

9. Faith lives on the *offices* of Christ, his general offices as Mediator and Redeemer, and his particular offices as Prophet, Priest, and King. Oh, will faith say, no man taketh an office upon him, but with a design to execute the duties of his office. Will any man pretend to be a magistrate, a minister, an advocate, or judge, and yet live in the neglect, or refuse to discharge the duties of such an office? the world would look on him as very unfaithful: and shall we imagine such a thing of Christ, who is "faithful in all his house?" Oh, will faith say, he is a Mediator and Peace-maker; and therefore I trust that he will make my peace with the offended Majesty of Heaven. He is a Saviour and Redeemer; and therefore I trust he will deliver me from the hands of all my enemies; he will save from sin, because it is his office to "finish transgression and make an end of it." He is a Prophet; and therefore I will trust that he will teach me the good and perfect will of God, open the secrets of his covenant, the mysteries of his kingdom, unto me. He is a Priest, and the great High Priest of our profession now, under the New Testament; and therefore he will, by the great sacrifice of atonement, purge away my sins, and make my person and duties acceptable unto God. He is a King; and therefore he will subdue my corruptions, and sanctify me throughout, in soul, body, and spirit. He is a Shepherd; and therefore I trust he will feed me, and lead me in his pastures, and I shall not want. He is a Physician, his name is JEHOVAH ROPHI; and therefore I trust he will heal all my diseases, he will open my blind eyes, he will cure the obstinacy of my will, the hardness of my heart, the carnality of my affections. He is the Captain of salvation, who "leads many sons unto glory;" and therefore I trust he will fight all my battles, and make me a conqueror, &c. Thus, I say, faith comes up from the wilderness, lean-

ing on the offices of Christ, general and particular. I shall only add,

10. That faith comes up from the wilderness, leaning upon the *divine attributes*, as they are manifested and displayed in Christ. God, absolutely considered, is the sinner's terror; and every attribute of God taken up absolutely, or in a law view, breathes nothing but wrath and ruin to the whole tribe of Adam in their fallen state: but God, manifesting himself in the flesh, or in the nature of man, through his death and satisfaction, every attribute of the divine nature presents itself as with a pleasant smile, inviting sinners to come to him as an object of trust; and, accordingly, faith leans upon these attributes of God, as the soul comes up from the wilderness. I shall only instance in these few:—

1*st*, Art thou surrounded with troubles on every hand? art thou called to engage with work thou art not able to manage? Well, here is the arm of Omnipotence stretched out, to "strengthen, help, and uphold," Is. xli. 10. And, accordingly, faith leans on the power of God, according to that command, Is. xxvi. 4: "Trust ye in the Lord for ever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." Paul leaned on the power of God, when he cried, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." So did the three children: "Our God whom we trust, is able to deliver us." So did Abraham; he was "persuaded, that he who had promised, was able also to perform," &c.

2*dly*, Art thou at any time brought to thy wits' end, that thou knowest not what to do? Well, in that case faith leans on the infinite wisdom or omniscience of a God in Christ: 2 Chron. xx. 12: "Neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee.—The Lord knows how to deliver the righteous." When the poor soul has been trying and searching itself, and, alas! is afraid it be deceived by a treacherous heart; in this case, faith will have recourse to the omniscience of a God in Christ, and say, "Search me, O God, and try me, and see if there be any wicked way in me," &c. When the poor soul is afraid of the secret plots of Satan, or of his confederates; in this case faith leans upon an omniscient God in Christ; who "discovers deep things out of darkness, and brings out to light the shadow of death."

3*dly*, Is the believer in the wilderness deserted by friends, or separated from them by banishment, imprisonment, or the like, saying with the church, Psal. cii. 6, 7, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness: I am like an owl of the desert: I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the house-top?" In this case faith leans upon the immensity of a God in Christ, and is ready to say, Though I be alone and forsaken by all

creatures, yet I cannot be parted or separated from my God, for a whole God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is every where present: "Do not I, the Lord, fill heaven and earth?" and "my way is not hid from the Lord, and my judgment is not passed over from my God:" and my fellowship and converse shall be with him, when I cannot have fellowship with my friends and familiars, who are removed far from me.

4thly, Oh but, may the believer say, I am a vile polluted creature, defiled in heart, lip, and life: and therefore the holiness of God is a terror to me, that I dare not so much as look towards the place where his honour dwells: "He is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity." *Answ.* The very holiness of a God in Christ, which thou makest use of to discourage thy faith, is glorious matter of support and encouragement; for faith's way of arguing from God's holiness is this: God is infinitely pure and holy, and therefore he will sanctify and purify me from iniquity; he hates sin, and punishes it, therefore he will destroy my lust; for it is not my person, but my sins and lusts, that are the objects of his hatred. If the rod come, why not? for thereby he will make me a "partaker of his holiness," and purge away my iniquity. It is mine iniquity, and not me, that he will "visit with the rod, and my transgression with stripes;" it is not me, but my sins, that he designs to destroy. But,

5thly, Say you, Can faith lean upon the justice of God? *Answ.* Yes, it can: for though this attribute be a rock of offence, to grind the wicked into powder; yet it is a rock of sweet repose and rest to the believer. Oh, will faith say, Lord, I have indeed sinned, and deserved thy wrath; and if thou mark iniquity, I cannot stand: but here is my relief, my Surety has done and suffered all that the law required; "he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities," &c.; and it is inconsistent with justice to punish the same transgression twice. Hence faith concludes, with Paul, "There is therefore now no condemnation: Who can lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" &c.

6thly, Faith sweetly leans upon the goodness, mercy, and love of God in Christ. Oh, will faith say, has God been so good, and gracious, and merciful, as to send his only-begotten Son, &c.; he has given him unto the death to be a curse, and to be made sin for me; and will he not do every other thing? "He that spared not his own Son, but gave him unto the death for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things? Oh how excellent is this his loving-kindness! therefore the sons of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings."

7thly, Faith leans on the truth and faithfulness of God in

Christ. Oh, says faith, "faithfulness is the girdle of his loins;" he is so true to his word, that "heaven and earth shall pass away before one jot of his word fall to the ground;" and therefore I will lean and rest myself here with assured confidence; and though he may defer the accomplishment of his word, yet I will believe and wait, and will not make haste: "The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak and not lie; though it tarry, I will wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry." Thus, I say, faith goes up from the wilderness leaning on the divine attributes, as they are manifested in Christ. And thus I have endeavoured to show what is the object of the life of faith, or what it is in Christ that faith leans upon, as it comes up from the wilderness.

Quest. 3. What is the difference between the life of faith, and the life of sight or sense? The words of the apostle, 2 Cor. v., gives ground for this inquiry, when he informs us, that while in the body, "we walk by faith, and not by sight;" and because "the life he lived in the flesh, was a life of faith upon the Son of God:" by which he plainly intimates, that a life of faith is calculated for an imbodied state, and that a life of sight and sense is not suited to our present condition here in the wilderness. There are these few things I offer to clear the difference:—

1. Sense regards only what a man has in hand, or presently enjoys; but faith looks to what a man has in Christ, and in the well-ordered covenant. Sense is like a child that is better pleased with a penny, or any little trifle the parent gives it, than if he were giving it a charter to the whole estate; but faith, although it will not despise any thing that comes from the hand of the Father, yet it is particularly taken up with the charter of the promise or covenant, and the estate lying in the hand of the great covenant-head, Christ Jesus; it views the promise as it is "yea and amen in Christ;" it views the covenant as confirmed by his death and blood, and says, with David, "This is all my salvation that he hath made with me," in my new covenant-head, "an everlasting covenant, well-ordered in all things, and sure."

2. Sense is ready to judge of the love of God by the aspect of providence, or his present carriage; and whenever he seems to frown or hide, it razes all to the foundation, crying, "The Lord hath forgotten to be gracious;" but faith reads the love of God in the face of Christ Jesus, in the acceptance that the Surety has met with, and in the declarations, offers, promises, of the word: "In his word will I hope," says faith; "Remember the word upon which thou hast caused thy servant to hope." Hence it follows,

3. Sense and sight is a variable and fluctuating thing; but faith is steady and fixed like Abraham, "who against hope believed in hope, and staggered not at the promise through unbelief." While the believer lives by sense, and enjoys the Lord in a sensible manner, he is ready then to say, "My mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved;" but anon the Lord hides his face, and the man is *troubled:* but faith keeps up a persuasion of his love, even when he is withdrawn, saying, Though I "walk in darkness, *I will* trust in the name of the Lord, and stay *myself* upon my God."

4. Sight and sense look only to things present; but faith, like a prophet, looks at things to come, things that are at a distance. Abraham, the father of the faithful, saw the day of Christ afar off: "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." When under darkness of affliction, desertion, temptation, it will say, "Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me: he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness."

5. Sense and sight are superficial and overly in their views of things, and easily deceived with appearances: but faith is a poring and diving grace, it goes deep into things. Faith will perceive poison in a cup of gold, it will see lions, dens, and leopards in Lebanon, among the trees and woods of aromatic scent: and therefore will turn away from them as dangerous, while sense is easily encouraged thereby: and on the other hand it will see a paradise of communion with the Lord in a wilderness, where sense can perceive nothing but prickling briers and thorns, 2 Cor. iv. 17: "Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work out for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

6. They differ in their consort and order. Faith is the leader, and sense the follower; faith is the duty, and sense the privilege connected with it; Eph. i. 12, 13: "After that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." John xi. 40: "Said I not unto thee, that if thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God?" Faith is the work, and sense is the encouragement. This is God's order, which the legal heart would always invert: we would be at the encouragement of faith, before we set about the duty of believing; like Thomas, John xx. 25: "Except I thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." But let us remember what Christ says to him, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed."

7. Sense is hasty and precipitant in its judgment; but faith is patient, and waits till it see the end. Sense draws rash and hasty conclusions when difficulties cast up: "I said in my haste, All men are liars: I said, I am cast out of thy sight."

But faith waits till the other side of the cloud cast up: "The Lord is a God of judgment," says faith; "and blessed are all they that wait for him. The vision is for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it, because it will surely come, it will not tarry;" hence, "He that believeth, shall not make haste." The Old Testament saints waited about four thousand years for the coming of the promised seed of the woman; and when they died, they died with the promise in their arms, waiting for the accomplishment, believing that he would come, and would not tarry beyond the fulness of time: Heb. xi. 13: "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them."

8. A life of sense is dangerous, but a life of faith is sure and safe. The danger of sense appears from the advantage that Satan took to ruin Adam and all his posterity. Had our first parents lived in the steady faith of God's promise and threatening in the covenant of works, they had never eaten of the forbidden tree; but they walked by sight and sense: the fruit was beautiful to the eye, and pleasant to the taste; this made them the more easily to listen to the hisses of the old serpent, saying, If ye eat, "ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil;" and thus he prevailed. We see, that when Paul was filled with sensible manifestations, being wrapt up to the third heaven, he was in danger of being lifted up with pride. But now, I say, the life of faith is safe and sure; and the reason is, because it will neither believe angels nor men, if their say does not agree with what God says in his word. It views things as they are laid in the revelation, and forms a judgment and estimate of things according to God's verdict of them: "To the law and to the testimony," says faith: "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them." Hence faith has the moon under its feet: "This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith." Faith, by going this way to work, makes the soul like mount Zion, which cannot be removed for ever. "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall ye be established," says the prophet to trembling Israel.

9. Sense has its only foundation and confidence within; it trades in the shallow waters of created grace, experimental attainments, marks of grace, and the like: but faith has its foundation *without* the man, in Christ, in God's covenant, in the great and precious promises. While the mariner stays in the shallow waters, he is in continual fear of rocks and sand-banks; but when he has launched out into the deep

waters, he is safe. Faith trades in the deep waters of the fulness of the Godhead that dwells bodily in Christ, "made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption;" and so it gets above doubts and racking fears of shipwreck: but it is (I say) otherwise with sense; it deals with created grace, manifestations, experiences, and attainments. And thus I have cleared in some measure the difference between faith and sense. I go now to,

II. The *second* thing I proposed upon this exhortation, which was to press a life of faith upon believers by some motives or arguments; and I shall only insist a little upon two.

1. Then, Consider that the life of faith is adapted and suited to a wilderness-lot. And this will be evident, if we consider,

1*st*, That the wilderness is a solitary place, where there is little communion or converse about the things of God: it is too frequent with the believer, that he cannot get a friend to whom he can open his mind in the world. Well, faith is adapted for such a case as this; for by faith believers see and converse with an invisible God, insomuch they are able to say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." God has a way of speaking with the believer, and the believer has a way of talking and conversing with God through Christ by faith, even in the wilderness, a solitary land: "My beloved spake, and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away." And what is faith but just the echo of the soul, when it answers such words of grace, saying, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth: Behold I come unto thee, for thou art the Lord my God?"

2*dly*, The wilderness is a misty and foggy land, where the traveller is in danger of losing his way; he "walks in darkness, and can see no light." Clouds of desertion, clouds of sin, clouds of error cast up; so that the poor believer, in his way to glory, knows not what course to take. Well, faith is adapted to such a lot and condition as this; for it "is the evidence of things not seen, and the substance of things hoped for: it can look through the mists and clouds that cast up in its way, and run its race, "looking unto Jesus" as its leader and commander. And when some are saying, "Lo, Christ is here; or, lo, he is there;" faith can distinguish between the voice of the true Shepherd and the voice of a stranger, and the voice of a *stranger* it *will not follow*.

3*dly*, The wilderness is a place of want; it is a dry, barren, and thirsty land, where there is nothing for the support of the soul. Well, faith is adapted to such a case as this also; for, like the virtuous woman in the Proverbs, it fetches

its food from the land of glory, Emmanuel's land. It has meat to eat that the world cannot afford, and which the world knows nothing of. Though Christ, as to his human nature, be in heaven, yet faith has a way of eating his flesh and of drinking his blood, which is *meat indeed*, and *drink indeed*. Faith can bring manna out of the clouds, and water out of the flinty rock; the hand of faith will pluck the fruit of the tree of life which grows in the midst of the paradise of God, and find its fruit sweet to the soul's taste. Many a sweet and heartsome banquet and enjoyment has faith, when the world are feeding on husks. Oh, says Jeremiah, "Thy word was found by me, and I did eat it, and it was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart."

4*thly*, The wilderness is a place of danger; thieves and robbers, lions and leopards, frequent the wilderness. Well, faith is of singular use in this condition also. When the enemy's fiery darts are cast at the believer, faith is a shield with which he beats them back, and turns them off without any hurt: and when the poor soul is like to be overpowered by the might or multitude of its enemies, faith has a way of bringing in the aid of Heaven for its help, as Jehoshaphat did; "We know not what to do, but our eyes are upon thee." Faith has a way of wielding the arm of Omnipotence in a time of danger; and then it cries, "Through God we shall do valiantly: for he it is that shall tread down our enemies. We will be joyful in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners." And when it is proper to make a retreat, faith turns into its strong-hold, which is *the name of the Lord*.

5*thly*, The wilderness is an unsettled place, where a person undergoes a variety of dispensations, turnings, and windings, in their lot. Well, faith is of particular use to the believer in this case, in regard that, like an anchor sure and steadfast, it enters within the veil, and keeps the soul steady and firm under all vicissitudes and temptations: hence, says Paul, "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound: every where, and in all things I am instructed, both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need." Faith keeps the soul "steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that its labour shall not be in vain in the Lord."

6*thly*, A wilderness is a place of manifold thorns and trials: "In the world ye shall have tribulation." Now, faith is of singular use here also; for it sees and considers, that this is the lot that God has ordered; that he will bring good out of all afflictions; that they are but *light*, and "for a moment,

and not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed:" and with the views of this future glory it balances all the afflictions of the present life. Thus you see that a life of faith is adapted and suited to a wilderness-lot; and therefore let us take the example of the spouse here, *come up from the wilderness, leaning upon the beloved*, living by faith upon him.

Mot. 2. To encourage and engage you to a leaning on Christ by faith as you come up from the wilderness, consider, believer, that he is thy husband and bridegroom; there is a marriage-relation between thee and him; and should not this encourage you to live and lean upon him? It is under this consideration that the spouse here takes him up, she *comes up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved.* And, to encourage faith in him under this relation, you will only consider the particulars following:—

1*st*, Consider, that he took thee for his bride and spouse when thou wast in a wretched and miserable plight, *blind, poor*, and *naked*, having the hue of hell upon thee: Ezek. xvi: "When I passed by thee, and saw thee in thy blood, I said unto thee, Live: and thy time was a time of love," &c. When thou wast *lying among the pots*, he loved thee; and he loved thee so dearly, as that he bought thee off from the hand of justice with the price of his precious blood: "He loved me, and he gave himself for me," says Paul. And should not this encourage thee to live and lean on him in thy journey through the wilderness?

2*dly*, He gave thee thy marriage clothes. When thou hadst not a rag to cover thee, he "clothed thee with white raiment, that the shame of thy nakedness might not appear:" hence is that song of the church, Is. lxi. 10: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." And Ezek. xvi. 7, 10—13. Now, should not the consideration of this kindness encourage thee to lean on him as thy beloved?

3*dly*, Consider, that in the marriage-contract of the new covenant he has made over himself, and all that he is, and all that he has, to thee: "All things are yours; for ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's." There he says, "Thy Maker is thine Husband; I will betroth thee unto me for ever, in faithfulness," &c.

4*thly*, Consider the closeness and intimacy of the union between him and thee, and let this encourage thee to lean and live on him by faith. It is far more intimate and dear than

the union between husband and wife among men; for they indeed are *one flesh*, but he is *one body* and *one spirit* with his spouse; he is *in them*, and they are *in him*. And by virtue of this intimate union, thou hast a title to him and his whole purchase. As the wife, when married to a man of a liberal estate, may look to his lands and lodgings, and say, This house is mine, and this land is mine, and such and such things are mine, for they are my husband's, and he is mine, and I am his: so may the believer, by virtue of his marriage-union with the Son of God, when he looks to heaven, he may say, This is my habitation; when he looks to the earth, he may say, This is my inn; when he looks to the angels, he may say, These are my guards; when he looks round about him, he may say, All things are mine, for they belong to my blessed Husband, who is *heir of all things*, and I am *heir of God* through him; his righteousness is mine to justify me; his grace is mine, to sanctify me; his spirit is mine, to comfort me, his covenant is mine, for it was made with him, and with me through him, &c.

5*thly*, Consider that thy blessed Husband, believer, calls thee to lean upon him, he counsels and encourages thee to depend on him as thou comest out of the wilderness; he speaks to his spouse in a kindly way, saying, "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee: Cast all your cares upon him, for he careth for you: Trust in him at all times, ye people, pour out your hearts before him," &c.

6*thly*, To encourage thy dependence on him in the wilderness, consider his tender sympathy with thee under all thy ailments and infirmities. Thou art as dear to him as the very "apple of his eye," and he has "set thee as a seal on his heart and his arm," and he is "touched with the feeling of thy infirmities; he gathers the lambs with his arms, he carries them in his bosom, he gently leads those that are with young; and he giveth power unto the faint, and increaseth strength to them that have no might."

Lastly, If you do not lean on him, you will surely faint, and fag, and sit up in thy journey through the wilderness; but if thou lean and rest on him, "thou shalt renew thy strength, and mount up with wings as eagles," thou shalt run and not be weary, and walk and not faint, till thou come to Zion, with songs. Now, let all these considerations encourage you to *come up from the wilderness leaning on your beloved.*

III. To shut up this discourse, it may be asked, What advice do you give us, in order to our living a life of faith, or our leaning on the beloved, as we come up from the wilder-

ness? I answer in general, that there is a threefold object that must be kept in view, in order to our living by faith; and every act of saving faith terminates upon all the three in their proper order. 1. There is the promise. 2. There is Christ in the promise. 3. Upon God in Christ. True faith can want none of them, and it is not a right faith that misses one of them. The promise is but a cipher, without Christ; and Christ is no Christ, unless we take God up in him. Faith cannot fix upon Christ without the promise, and it cannot fix upon God but as he is in Christ. Take away the promise, and you take away Christ; and take away Christ, and you take away God; for God is no God to a sinner, but as he is in Christ. So, then, of necessity these three grand objects of faith must be taken in, and taken up, in order to [live] a life of faith. And therefore I shall endeavour to show how faith is to act upon every one of them, by answering a threefold question. 1. How faith is to act upon the promise of the word, which is the next and immediate object of faith? 2. How it is to be acted upon Christ? 3. How it is to act upon a God in Christ?

Quest. 1. What counsel or advice do you give us, in order to our living by faith upon the promise, which is the next or most immediate object of faith?

I answer, in order to your living by faith upon the promise, I give you these few advices following:—

In your reading of the scriptures, collect the promises, and gather them, pick them up; for "by these do men live, and in all these is the life of your souls." By the "great and precious promises" we are made "partakers of the divine nature."

Treasure them up in your minds, for they are the fuel of faith; and faith can as little act without the promise as fire can burn without fuel. And therefore let your minds be, like the pot in the ark, always full of the manna of the word. A promise hid in the heart will do you service when you have neither access to read nor hear.

Be frequently meditating on them, and rolling them like a sweet morsel under your tongue. "While I was musing, the fire burned," says David. Faith, which works by love, is set at work by serious meditation. The promises are the sweetest lines in Christ's love-letters to his spouse: there is majesty in the command, severity in the threatening; but love and mercy predominate in the promise."

Be frequently pleading the promise in prayer. The promise is God's bond, and God's bond is to be pursued in the court of grace, at the throne of grace: "For these things I will be inquired of that I may do it for them." This was

David's way, "Remember the word upon which thou hast caused me to hope."

Study to know and be persuaded, that the promise of God is a notable and excellent security. And this appears from this consideration; it is the word of God, "who cannot lie," &c.; it is his registered word, &c., it is his sealed word, &c.; he has given caution that his word shall be good, &c.; he gives the earnest of his word, the Holy Spirit of promise, &c.; he has added his oath to it, &c.; he has attested it by the three that bear record in heaven, &c.

I advise you to take up the promise as delivered and endorsed unto you: "To you is the word of this salvation sent: The promise is unto you, and to your seed, and to all that are afar off," Heb. iv. 1: "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us, any of us should seem to come short."

Take up the promise as the genuine thought and picture of his heart, and that he really thinks as he speaks; for unbelief is ready to suggest, that he says one thing, and thinks another. Beware of this, it is an imputation upon man to do so, and the use of words is lost if men do not think as they speak: far less are we to imagine that there is any disingenuousness in a God of truth; no, no, his words correspond to his mind.

Be persuaded that it is an easy thing for God to fulfil his promise. There is no such distance between God's saying and working, as we are ready to imagine, Psal. xxxiii. 9: "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. Unbelief represents the promise as a thing difficult or hard to be performed; but it is quite otherwise: saying and working is all one with God; he commands "things that are not, as if they were."

In pleading the promise, beware of limiting the holy One of Israel. To clear this, take these two cautions: 1. Beware of being peremptory in expecting what is not absolutely promised. 2. Do not always expect a present accomplishment of the promise, but wait; for "the vision is for an appointed time." "He that believeth does not make haste."

When faith cannot get fixed upon the conditional promise, then let it go to the absolute, where the condition mentioned is always to be found, &c.

Take care that, in acting faith upon the promise, you always remember the relation between Christ and the promise; for "all the promises are in him yea, and in him amen." Many break their necks upon the promise, by separating between Christ and the promise; Christ is the Alpha and Omega of all the promises.

Quest. What is the relation between Christ and the promise?

Answ. 1. Christ is to be considered as the first heir of all the promises. Adam was the heir of the promise of life made in the first covenant, while he continued in his obedience; but he lost his heirship to himself and his whole race by the fall: Christ, as the second Adam, steps in, and fulfils the command of the first covenant, and undergoes its penalty in our room: and so he becomes a new heir to the promise of eternal life, and of every thing pertaining to it. Now, our title to the promise comes in through him, through his obedience, and death, his everlasting righteousness; so that in believing the promise, we must at the same time submit to his righteousness.

2. Christ is to be considered as the great blessing contained in all the promises; hence called in a way of eminence, "The mercy promised to the fathers." What was the first promise in paradise, but Christ the seed of the woman? What was the promise to Abraham, but Christ, "in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed?" And when he is promised, all is promised; for he is *all in all.* There is not a promise in the Bible, but has less or more of Christ in it. In a word, Christ himself, as contained in the word of faith, draws all the blessings of heaven and a long eternity after him.

Christ is to be considered as the glorious fountain and treasury, in whom all the promised blessings are hid. He it is in whom all the treasures of grace and glory are hid; and it is out of his fulness that we receive all promised grace.

4. Christ is the foundation and ground upon which they all stand. The believer and the promise stand upon the same foundation: "Behold, I lay in Zion a foundation." And all the promises are founded upon him, upon his blood and satisfaction, without which never had a promise been given out by God to any of the children of men. And faith, in improving the promise, leans upon this foundation, stands upon this ground: just as a man, leaning upon a staff, sets the staff upon the ground, and so leans upon the staff: for except the staff lean to the ground, it will not support us; so unless the staff of the promise be set upon Christ as its proper ground, it will do us no service. And I fear a defect here is the ruin of many gospel-hearers: they pretend to lean to God's promise, but in the mean time they do not set the staff of the promise upon Christ, and his satisfaction and intercession; and so they and their faith fall into hell together in the end. Thus I have given you some advices, in order to your improvement of the promises in a way of believing.

Quest. 2. How is faith to act upon Christ in the promise, or by virtue of the promise? for, as I told you, all the promises are in him, and he is in all the promises.

For answer to this, I would have you know, that in every promise of the word, Christ is represented as clothed or invested with one or other of his mediatory offices of prophet, priest, or king; *he is made of God unto us wisdom*, as a prophet, *righteousness* as a priest, and *sanctification* as a king; and in one or other of these offices he gives out all the sure mercies of David, all the blessings of a covenant of grace. And therefore, in order to your living by faith upon Christ in the promise, take the few following advices:—

1. Study to be well acquaited with the person and offices of Christ. Study, I say, to be well acquainted with the dignity and excellency of his person as he is "Emmanuel, the Word made flesh, God manifested in the flesh;" for upon the excellency of his person depends the validity of the whole of his undertaking as our Redeemer. Unless this be kept in the soul's view, it cannot but wander in the dark, without knowing where to fix: we will be fair to mistake a shadow instead of a substance, unless we have becoming views of the excellency of a Redeemer's person. But then, I say, we must study to know him, not only in his person, but in his offices with which he is invested; for faith, or trust, has a respect to a person vested with some office or other. As when you employ an advocate, you trust the person as clothed with that office: and when you employ a physician, you trust the person as clothed with that office; and when you employ a minister, you trust his person as clothed with the ministerial office: so, here, when we employ Christ, or lean upon him, we trust him as clothed with his prophetical, priestly, or kingly offices. And therefore, in order to the life of faith, study to be well acquainted with the person of Christ as vested with these offices, and what it is that we are to expect from him as clothed with these offices.

Quest. What has faith to expect from Christ as a prophet?

Answ. As a prophet he reveals his Father's will by his word externally, and by his Spirit internally; and therefore faith eyes him for instruction in the things of God. As a prophet, "he received gifts for men, and gives apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers;" and therefore faith looks to him for "pastors according to his heart," and for his blessing upon the word and ordinances dispensed by them, for the edification of his body, the church. As a prophet, he received the Spirit, and all his influences; and therefore faith looks to him in this office for the Spirit to "lead into all

truth," to rend the veil, dispel darkness, and to lead in the way we know not.

Quest. What has faith to expect from Christ, as a priest?

Answ. As a priest, he satisfies justice, redeems from the curse of the law, from hell and wrath. As a priest, he "brings in everlasting righteousness, and makes intercession for the transgressors, opens the way to the holiest." And hence faith has ground to expect from him the benefits of his purchase, every mercy of the covenant, as the price of his blood, and the fruit of his intercession.

Quest. What has faith to expect from Christ as a king?

Answ. As a king, he gives forth his laws, and a heart to obey them; and therefore faith expects that he will mould heart and life in a conformity to his will, according to that promise, "I will write my laws in their hearts." As a king, he subdues his and his people's enemies; and therefore faith looks to him for victory over sin, Satan, the world, &c. As a king, "the government is upon his shoulder," and he rules in the midst of his enemies: and therefore faith expects that all shall be well, according to his promise, Rom. viii. 28: "All things shall work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." As a king, he gives peace of conscience, joy in the Holy Ghost, increase of grace, and perseverance therein to the end; and therefore faith expects all these things from him, as vested with a kingly office. Thus you see what excellent matter faith has to work upon, when it views the person of Christ, as clothed with his prophetical, priestly, and kingly offices. Now, in order to your living by faith on him, study to have a clear uptaking of his person, God-man clothed with these offices.

2. Another advice I give you, consequential to the former, is this: Study to know and be persuaded, that these offices of Christ are purely relative, that is, they are not for his own, but for our advantage; it was for us that he took these offices upon him, and it is for our benefit that he exercises them. Yea, in some respects, these offices depend on us as one relation depends upon another; for as there cannot be a father without a child, so Christ could not be a prophet, unless there were ignorant sinners to instruct; he could not be a priest, unless there were guilty transgressors for whom he might satisfy and intercede; he could not be a king, without subjects to govern. So that these offices of Christ are purely relative; he is a prophet for us, a priest for us, and a king for us: Hence, 1 Cor. i. 30, he is made of God unto us (not to himself, but to us) wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption." Oh what strong ground has faith to lean

upon, when these offices of Christ are taken up in this view and relation to us! Oh, will faith say, I will trust him for illumination and instruction, because he is a prophet to instruct the ignorant; I will trust him for pardon, peace, and reconciliation, because he is a "priest ordained for men in things pertaining to God;" I will trust him for sanctification, and victory over death, and sin, and Satan, and the world, because he is given for a commander and king to the people: he will instruct me, he will justify me, he will sanctify, and subdue mine iniquities, because he is my prophet, priest, and king.

3. Be persuaded, that Christ executes all these offices as a duty or a trust committed to him. When a man is clothed with any office, he is obliged to discharge the duties of that office; and he is unfaithful to his trust, if he do it not. His Father's commandment is upon him to this purpose, and therefore called his Father's "servant: This commandment (as a servant,) he received from the Father." And not only his Father's command, but his own voluntary engagement, Psal. xl. 6: "Mine ears hast thou bored." Now, is it to be once thought or imagined, that Christ will fail in the duties of his offices, which the Father commanded him, and in which he himself has voluntarily engaged?

4. Let faith begin first to act upon the priestly office of Christ; for this is the basis and foundation of the other two, Is. liii. at the close, Phil. ii. 8—10. Psal. cx. last. The priest under the law had the Urim and Thummim in his breastplate, and a crown upon his head; to learn us, that the kingly and prophetical offices, of which these were the badges, were both founded on the sacerdotal or priestly office. So then, study to improve Christ, as a priest and propitiation, set forth in the glorious gospel, to be applied by faith; and then it will be easy to believe that he is thy prophet and king. If thou canst believe that he suffered and satisfied for thy sins, it will be easy for thee to believe, that as a prophet he will wash thee, and as a king he will sanctify, and subdue thine iniquities. Yea, know, sirs, for your encouragement, that the very end for which Christ purchased grace and glory by his blood was, that it might be offered to all, and actually applied to every soul that believes in him. So, then, let faith ground first upon the priestly office of Christ, and upon that foundation claim the benefit of his other offices.

5. Remember how affectionately Christ executed these offices upon earth, and this will be a strong ground to believe that he will not neglect them, now that he is ascended into heaven. He had a great desire to be sacrificed, Luke xii. 50: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I

straitened till it be accomplished!" He *longed* to be dipped in the Red sea of his Father's wrath. The word signifies that his soul was *big* or *swelled* within him with desire. He had not only desire, but delight in his mediatory work: "I delight to do thy will, O my God. Yea, he rejoiced in spirit when the time of his suffering drew near. Now, may faith argue, Did Christ execute his offices with such desire, delight, and joy, in a state of humiliation; and will he not much more do it in a state of exaltation? Yes, surely he will; for he is "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day and for ever."

6. Consider, that both the Father and the Holy Ghost are engaged for the execution of these offices of Christ. The Father is engaged, because he ordained him to these offices, and ordained him with the solemnity of a decree, Psal. ii. and with the solemnity of an oath, Psal. cx., and with the solemnity of a proclamation from heaven, Matth. iii. at the close: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." Now, may faith say, was Christ ordained with such solemnity to his mediatory offices by his Father; and will not the Father see to the execution of them with respect to my soul, that puts its trust in him? Again, as the Father, so the Holy Ghost is concerned in the execution of these offices. The Holy Ghost furnished him with gifts and graces for this very end: Is. lxi. 1: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound," &c. Now, will ever the Spirit of the Lord lose his labour? No, no: God has "put his Spirit upon him, therefore he will bring forth judgment to the Gentiles, and the isles shall wait for his law." Thus you see, that faith has all the security that Heaven can afford for the execution of his offices. Thus, then, *come up from the wilderness, leaning upon the beloved.*

Quest. 3. How is faith to act upon a God in Christ, who is the ultimate object of faith?

Answ. In these particulars, 1. Let faith view a God in Christ in a way of appropriation, as its own God. This, we find, has been the way of the saints in all ages and generations; it still lays claim to God in Christ, with its appropriating *my*, &c. Psal. xvi. 2: "O my soul, thou hast said unto the Lord, Thou art my Lord." And ver. 5: "The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance, and of my cup," &c. And Psal. lxxiii. 26: "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever." And if you ask, Upon what ground does faith go, in laying claim to a God in

Christ as its own God? I answer, It goes upon the ground of his assuming our nature in the person of his eternal Son, and the covenant-grant and promise through him; "I am the Lord thy God; I will be your God, and ye shall be my people." Faith sets to its amen unto the grant, and says, "This God is my God for ever;" and it shall be so, because he has said it; and, "Has he said it, and will he not do it? hath he spoken it, and shall it not come to pass?"

2. Having fixed thy claim unto a God in Christ as thy own God, then proceed to take a view of all his attributes and perfections; for every one of them (as I showed before) is a pillar and strong rock, on which thy faith may lean with the greatest confidence and security, even "though the earth should be removed, though the mountain should be cast into the midst of the sea." O, will faith say, my God is a God of infinite power, and "doth whatever pleaseth him in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" and this power is through Christ engaged for my preservation, "He will hide me as in a pavilion in the evil day." My God in Christ is a God of infinite wisdom; and therefore he will *lead me in the way I know not*, and make me *wise to salvation*. He is a God of infinite justice; and, therefore, having accepted a satisfaction for my sins in the Surety, he is "faithful and just in forgiving;" he will "blot out mine iniquities as a cloud, and as a thick cloud all my transgressions." He is a God of unspotted holiness; and therefore he will sanctify me according to his covenant; "I will sprinkle them with clean water, and they shall be clean: from all their filthinesses and from all their idols will I cleanse them." He is a God of infinite bowels and mercy; and therefore he will pity and pardon me, and "hear me when I cry," &c. He is a God of infinite faithfulness; this is the "girdle of his loins and reins;" and therefore he will not suffer his promise to fall, "his covenant he will not break," &c. Thus faith leans and rests on the divine attributes as they are manifested in Christ.

3. Faith leans upon a God in Christ, as one that is infinitely bountiful and liberal; and argues as the apostle does, Rom. viii. 32: "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how will he not with him also freely give us all things?" Faith sees that his treasures can never be diminished, far less can they be spent or exhausted; and oh how heartily does faith lay claim to these treasures, when it hears him saying, as James i. 5: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him." Faith views the providence of a God in Christ as calculated and designed for the advancement of his own glory, and

levelled at the good of them that love him; and this quiets the soul amidst all the reelings and shakings of this lower world. "The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice: let the multitude of isles be glad thereof."

5. *Lastly*, Faith, acting upon a God in Christ, will see an eternity of happiness beyond time, in the immediate fruition and enjoyment of him; hence, says Asaph, Psal. lxxiii. 26, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever."

SERMON XXIII.

THE TRUE SUBSTANCE AND STRENGTH OF A CHURCH AND NATION.*

So the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.—Isa. vi. 13.

In this chapter we have, *first*, An awful vision of God made to the prophet Isaiah. He got a view of the infinite Jehovah, in the person of his eternal Son; for so Christ himself explains it, John xii. 41: "These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory." Christ had a glory with the Father before his incarnation, yea, before the world was; and Isaiah got a view of this glory. *Quest.* What did he see? *Answ.* 1. He saw his throne, high and lifted up. 2. He saw his temple, his church on earth, filled with the train of his glorious excellencies. 3. He saw the bright attendants that surround his throne, cherubims and seraphims, covering their faces with their wings, because of the dazzling floods of glory that brake out from his presence. 4. He heard some of their anthems, or songs of praise, by which they celebrate the glory of his unspotted holiness; and then wonder that the brightness of that glory should ever shine in this lower world: O, say they, "The whole earth is full of his glory," ver. 3. They are not surprised to see his glory shining in heaven, where sin never entered: but to see the glory of God shining through a veil of flesh, and displayed in this dunghill-world of sin and misery, is what fills them with eternal wonder.

Secondly, We have the effects of this vision. 1. Upon the

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temple; where, it is likely, Isaiah got the manifestation, ver. 4: "The posts of the door moved at the voice of him that cried, and the earth shook, and the house was filled with smoke." A cloud was cast over the face of his throne, and the posts and pillars of the temple tremble, as a signal of the destruction of the city and temple; first by the Babylonians, and afterwards by the Romans. 2. Upon this the prophet is struck with consternation at the sight of the divine glory, ver. 5: "Wo is me, for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." 3. We have the silencing of the prophet's fears by the "good and comfortable words" which the angel spake to him; and a sign given him of the remission of his sin, as a preparation for his converse with God, ver. 6, 7: "Then flew one of the seraphims unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. And he laid it upon my mouth, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." 4. We have an awful commission given to the prophet. An inquiry is made, by a Trinity, for a man that would bear the commission; the prophet offers himself: ver. 8: "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Here am I," says the prophet, "send me." The prophet is a volunteer in his Master's service, ready to encounter the greatest difficulties in the work; he knew that if he had God's commission, he should have his countenance and assistance; he "sends none a warfare upon their own charges." The Lord takes the prophet at his word, and gives him his commission, ver. 9, to the close. Where he gives him to understand three things. (1.) That the generality of the people to whom he was sent, would turn a deaf ear to his message, which would be followed with a judicial stroke of blindness, deadness, and stupidity, ver. 9, 10. (2.) That the consequence of this would be their utter ruin, ver. 11, 12. (3.) That a remnant should be spared as a monument of divine mercy, ver. 13: "But yet in it shall be a tenth, and it shall return, and shall be eaten; as a teil-tree, and as an oak whose substance is in them, when they cast their leaves:" *so the holy seed shall be the substance thereof.*

Where, in general, you may see, that in the worst of times, in the times of the greatest defection and backsliding, God has a little remnant that keep their garments clean, and that in the midst of the most sweeping and desolating calamities he will take special notice of for good. More particularly, we have four or five things asserted in this verse, with respect to the Lord's remnant,

1. That the remnant will be but small, "In it shall be a tenth;" a certain number put for an uncertain: a very small number, in comparison of the multitude that shall perish in their unbelief, and be slain in the common calamity. The tenth or tithe was God's proportion under the law, consecrated for his use.

Observe, That, among the multitude of mankind that fall to the devil's share, God's remnant are but a small number; his flock is but a little flock, like the gleanings after the vintage. But yet them he will not want, though he should invade hell to recover them; Is. liii. 12: "I will divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong." And this portion, this remnant, shall be consecrated to his service and honour, as the tenth was under the law.

2. It is asserted of this remnant, that they *shall return;* that is, they shall return from their sins and backslidings, and the common defections and backslidings of the church of Israel; and they excite one another, saying, "Come, and let us return unto the Lord: for he hath broken, and he will bind us up," Hos. vi. 1. And they shall return also from their captivity in Babylon to their native land; and when God turns back their captivity, it will be refreshing like south-running streams of water.

3. It is asserted of this remnant, that it *shall be eaten;* that is, (say some) this remnant, after they return, shall be eaten, consumed, or devoured a second time by the kings of Assyria.

Observe, That God's remnant, when they are delivered out of one trouble, must lay their account with another; when they have *run with the footmen,* they must *contend with horses.*

Or, as some, particularly Henry on the place, understands it, *shall be eaten,* that is, shall be accepted of God as the tithe was, which was meat in God's house. The saving of this remnant shall be meat to the faith and hope of them that wish well to God's kingdom and interest.

4. It is said of this remnant, that it shall be "as a teil, and as an oak, whose substance is in them, even when they cast their leaves." As if he had said, Though they may be stripped of their outward prosperity, and share of the common calamity; yet they shall recover like a tree in the spring, and sprout and flourish again: although they fall, they shall not be utterly cast down; for "there is hope of a tree, though it be cut down, that it will sprout again," Job xiv. 7.

5. That this distinguished remnant shall be the stay and

support of the public interest: *The holy seed shall be the substance thereof.* Where we may notice two things.

1*st*, A description of God's little remnant; they are *the holy seed.*

2*dly*, The bulk they bear in the land, or in God's view, however little account may be made of them by the men of the world; though they be the dross and off-scouring of the earth, in the view of men; yet, before the Lord, they are *the substance thereof.*

For the *first* of these, the designation given to God's remnant, *the holy seed.* Some, by *the holy seed*, understand Christ; who is sometimes called "the seed of the woman," "the seed of Abraham," sometimes "the seed of David according to the flesh," and he, before his coming in the flesh, was the substance or strength of the Jewish nation; that nation was preserved from utter ruin till the Messiah should come of it; hence says the prophet, Is. lxv. 8, "Destroy it not, for a blessing is in it;" and when once that blessing was come, in whom men were to be blessed, the nation and church of the Jews was soon destroyed and cut off. Others, by *the holy seed*, understand the godly remnant that were among that people. These are frequently in scripture spoken of under the notion of *seed:* Psal. xxii. 30: "A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation." And Is. liii. 10: "He shall see his seed." And then they are called a *holy* seed: because they are renewed after the image of God, in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; separate from the rest of the profane world, who were carried down the stream both of personal and public provocation.

2*dly*, Notice the bulk and room this holy seed bears in God's view, however much they may be despised in the eyes of the world; they are *the substance thereof*, that is, of the church and nation. Some think that in this last clause the former metaphor of a tree is still continued. The body of the Jewish nation is compared to a tree, common professors to the leaves of a tree, which in the autumn and winter are blown away in a storm, and driven hither and thither with the wind; but *the holy seed* or God's remnant of believers, or sanctified souls, are like the trunk or stem of the tree, which remains firm against the winter-wind of temptation, error, defection, or persecution; and having the life and sap of the reality of the grace of God in them, sprouts and flourishes again in the spring, when the winter is over and past. Some read the words, *The holy seed shall be the stay, strength, or support thereof;* being an allusion, as they think, to the elms and oaks which grew on either side of the causeway, or raised way, that led from the king's palace to the temple, 1 Kings

x. 5; which served to support the terrace, or raised way, that the earth might not crumble away from it; so the truly godly in the nation are the stay and support of it; the pillars of the land, that keeps things together, that the whole nation and church do not go to utter ruin.

OBSERVE, "That God's remnant, or his holy seed, in a church or nation, are just the strength and substance thereof." *The holy seed shall be the substance thereof.*

The doctrine being the same as the words, I shall not stay upon the proof or confirmation of it: scriptures to this purpose will occur in the prosecution, which I shall, through the Lord's assistance, attempt in the following order and method:—

I. Give some account of God's remnant, as contradistinguished from the rest of the world.

II. Why called a *seed.*

III. Why called a *holy seed.*

IV. What may be imported in their being called the *substance* of a land or church.

V. In what respect they are so. And,

VI. Apply.

I. The *first* thing is, to *give some account of this remnant, who are here called a* holy seed, *in contradistinction from the rest of mankind.*

1. Then, they are a people of a distinct pedigree from the rest of mankind. It is true, indeed, as to their natural birth, they are come of the same common stock of the first Adam, and therefore "children of wrath, even as others:" but as to their spiritual or supernatural birth, they are "born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God," John i. 13; hence it is that they are ready to say to God, Is. lxiii. 16, "Doubtless thou art our father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not; thou, O Lord, art our father."

2. This remnant, this holy seed, are a people under a distinct government from the rest of mankind. All mankind by nature are under the government of the devil, the god of this world; and their lusts are the laws by which they walk, Eph. ii. 2, 3. But God's remnant, through the power of grace, have broken their covenant with hell, and agreement with death, and cast themselves under the government of a God in Christ, saying, "O Lord, other lords besides thee have had dominion over us: but by thee only will we make

mention of thy name." "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, the Lord is our king, and he will save us."

3. They are a people that stand upon a quite different foundation than the rest of the world. Others are building upon the sand of general mercy, of an empty profession, common providences, common graces, the works of the law, or some such sandy foundation; they are building their hope of acceptance and salvation there; but God's remnant have quit all these foundations of sand, and taken their only standing upon the clear and cleanly foundation that God hath laid in Zion: namely, an incarnate God, doing and dying, and interceding in the room of guilty sinners: here, I say, they make their stand for eternity, saying, "This is my rest;" and, indeed, "other foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."

4. They are a people of a different spirit from the rest of mankind: 1 Cor. ii. 12: "We have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God." It is said of Caleb and Joshua, that they were of another spirit than the rest of the Israelites. God's holy seed have received the Spirit of their everlasting Father, according to his promise, "I will put my Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes."

5. They travel a different road from the rest of the world. The men of the world travel in the broad way that leads to destruction, the road of open profanity, the road of mere morality, or, at best, the road of legality, which all lead down to the chambers of death; but God's remnant walk in the "straight and narrow way that leadeth unto life," the cleanly way of obedience, of faith: Is. xxxv. 8: "A highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools, shall not err therein." And hence it comes,

6. *Lastly*, That they make a quite different end, and have a different landing at death from the rest of mankind: Psal. xxxvii. 37, 38: "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace. But the transgressors shall be destroyed together, the end of the wicked shall be cut off."

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to *inquire why this remnant is here called the* seed: *The holy seed shall be the substance thereof.* Now, for clearing this, consider, that all mankind are divided into the seed of the woman, and the seed of the serpent; the seed of Christ, and the seed of the devil. Christ himself is the seed of the woman, and the seed of

Abraham, in a way of eminence and excellence; but out of this one seed has sprung a numerous issue and offspring promised to him of his Father, Is. liii. 10: "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days;" and this is the seed that is here spoken of. And they are called a *seed*, or *his seed*, for these reasons:—

1. Because they owe their very being to him, not simply as a God Creator, but as a God Redeemer. You know children derive their natural being from their parents, they are just pieces of themselves; so believers owe their spiritual being to a God in Christ, they are "partakers of the divine nature," and the seed of God abideth in them; and in this respect they "are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus."

2. Because of the likeness that they bear to him. As a man's seed and offspring bears a resemblance to him; so here, as we are the seed of the first Adam, and creatures in this world, we bear a similitude to him; but as we are the seed of the second Adam, we will bear a resemblance to him: "We, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

3. They are his seed in respect of their dependence on him. A man's children, or offspring, depend on him for food, clothing, counsel, and every thing: so believers depend upon a God in Christ for their all, they trust in him, and call upon him for their daily bread, for supplies of grace, light, and life; and, accordingly, "out of his fulness they receive grace for grace."

4. Their being his seed implies, that they are his family and household in this lower world; hence, says the apostle, "We are no more aliens and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." They have got a name and a place, in his house and within his walls, even an everlasting name, that shall never be cut off.

5. It implies that they are the heirs of his estate. A man's seed are heirs of his inheritance; so believers, being the seed of Christ, are "heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus," heirs of a large fortune indeed, even "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away:" he settles all by the covenant on them.

Before I shut up this head, I will give you a few remarks concerning this seed of Christ.

1. Then, This seed is but a remnant of mankind, as you see in the text, *In it shall be a tenth;* but like the tithe, or tenth part, which is but little in respect of the rest of the

field; hence called "a little flock; a few names in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments." But yet,

2. For all that, it is a numerous seed, absolutely considered in themselves: Rev. vii. 9, they are called "an innumerable company, which no man could number." As the natural seed of Abraham are said to be like the sand of the sea for multitude; so the spiritual seed of Abraham, who are the seed of Christ also, will be an innumerable company, when they are all gathered together to Christ; therefore compared to the drops of the dew.

3. They are an honourable seed; and no wonder, for they are the seed of the "King of kings, and Lord of lords, and each one of them resembles the child of a king;" yea they are "made kings and priests unto God." "Ever since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable."

4. They are a costly seed to our glorious Redeemer; for they are the purchase of his blood, "redeemed not with corruptible things, as silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ."

5. They are a flourishing and fruitful seed; they shall be called the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, in whom he will be glorified." They abide in Christ, and Christ abides in them; and they who are thus "planted in the house of the Lord, flourish in the courts of our God," Psal. xcii.

6. They are a troubled and persecuted seed in this world. You know the husbandman's seed-corn must be threshed; the cart-wheel is made to pass over it; the ox and the ass were made to tread upon it; hence that command, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn." So the seed of Christ, are frequently threshed with the flail of affliction: "Through many tribulations we must enter into the kingdom of heaven." God sets the oxen, the asses, the brute beasts, the men of this world, *who*, like beasts, "have their portion in this life, to trample upon his seed, that they may be prepared and fitted for the Master's use; for by these afflictions he "makes us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

7. Though they be a troubled and persecuted seed, yet they are a very durable seed, "His seed shall endure for ever," Psal. lxxxix. 28, 29. Christ's seed, and his throne, run parallel in their duration and continuance: "His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne as the days of heaven." The perpetuity of his kingdom secures the duration of his seed, so that the world may as well imagine to overturn his throne, as to raze his seed in the world; while he is a King, he will have subjects; and blessed be his name, "His king-

dom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there is no end."

8. They are in this world a scattered seed; when the angels are sent to gather them together at the last day, they will be sent to the four winds, or quarters of the world. They are scattered in respect of place or situation; Is. xxiv. 16: "From the uttermost wings of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous." They are many times scattered by persecution; when a cluster of them gets together, commonly the storms of persecution arising from the malice of hell, scatter them abroad, as we read in the Acts, chap. viii.

9. They are a holy seed. But this leads me to,

III. The *third* thing proposed, which was, to *inquire why God's remnant are not only called a* seed," *but a* holy seed? I answer in these three: 1. They are called a *holy seed*, in respect of separation. 2. In respect of purification. 3. In respect of participation of divine holiness.

First, I say, the church of believers are called a *holy seed*, in respect of separation from the rest of the profane world. Any thing that is sequestrated from a common use, and dedicated to the service of God, is called *holy*. Thus the temple, the tabernacle, and the utensils of both, are called *holy*, because dedicated to God, to his service. So the whole body of the children of Israel are called *a holy nation*; because they were separated from the rest of the world, as the peculiar people of God. In this respect the seed of Christ are a *holy seed*; because God has set them apart for himself, and they have set themselves apart for him. He has separated them from the rest of the world, the common mass of mankind, by an eternal decree of election, by a donation or grant that he made of them to Christ: "Thine they were, and thou gavest them me," John xvii. 6. By a peculiar purchase, having "redeemed them from their vain conversation, not with silver and gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." By an effectual calling of them by the power of his grace, whereby they are "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son." By a voluntary surrender of themselves to the Lord, under the influence of his own grace, they have presented themselves "a holy, living, and acceptable sacrifice to him, which is their reasonable service." Thus they are holy in respect of separation.

Secondly, They are a *holy seed*, in respect of their purification from filth and pollution. At the same moment that the guilt of sin is pardoned in justification, at the same moment

the purifying work of the Spirit is begun; and that which takes away the guilt of sin in justification, also purifies the soul from the filth of sin, by which its Ethiopian hue is changed. Now, this cleansing and purifying work of the Spirit may be viewed, either in its beginning, progress, or consummation.

1. Inchoate or begun in regeneration. Hence, says the apostle, Tit. iii. 5, "We are saved by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." The Holy Spirit of God takes the soul, defiled by "lying among the pots" of sin, and bathes it in the "fountain opened to the house of David, and inhabitants of Jerusalem," by which its sin and uncleanness are purged away.

2. It is to be viewed in its progress, as it is carried on by the renewed actings of faith, which more and more "purifies the heart," Acts xv. 9. Every new act of faith, on the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ, carries on the work of sanctification in the soul a degree higher. As Naaman, by the prophet's direction, went down seven times into the waters of Jordan, till he was wholly purified from his bodily leprosy; so the soul finding, while in this world, something of the filth of sin cleaving to it, it is always by faith, dipping itself in the Jordan of a Redeemer's blood, till at death, it come forth, "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Hence, 2 Cor. vii. 1, believers are said to "cleanse themselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord."

3. This purifying work may be viewed in its consummation at death, when every spot or wrinkle of sin is wholly removed. Believers in this life, are but fair like the moon, which has black spots in her; but then they are clear like the sun, "They shall shine forth like the sun, in the kingdom of their Father." As the soul, in the moment of its union with the body, becomes sinful; so in the moment of its disunion, it becomes perfectly holy, and free of all the spots of sin: sin brought death into the world, and God, in a way of holy resentment, makes use of death to put an end to the very being of sin in his saints. Thus you see, that they are holy in respect of purification.

Thirdly, They are called a holy seed, in respect of a positive communication of divine holiness; for we are said to be renewed after the image of God, which was lost by the fall of the first Adam. The priests under the law, when about to minister in the holy place, were not only to purify and wash themselves, but to put on their priestly attire and ornaments, which were exceedingly beautiful: so believers are a *royal priesthood*; they must not only be washed from the filth of

sin, but, like "the King's daughter," they must be made "all glorious within;" they must not only have the robe of imputed righteousness put upon them, but the beautifying grace of the Holy Spirit implanted in them; which is sometimes called a partaking of the divine nature; sometimes, the beauty of the Lord, "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us;" sometimes called, the new heart, the new spirit, the image of God, the life of God in the soul. And this positive work of sanctification, gets various names and designations, just according to the different actings of the principle of spiritual life. As it takes in the revelation of the mind of God in the word read or preached, it is called *knowledge;* as it depends on the Lord Christ, by virtue of the new covenant and promise, it is called *faith;* as it delights itself in the Lord, it is called *love;* as it mourns or grieves for sin, by which it has offended the Lord, it is called *repentance;* as it stands in awe of God, as a Father, it is called *fear;* as it sweetens the mind, and composes it, it is called *meekness;* as it falls in with the preceptive or commanding will of God in heart and life, it is called *obedience;* as it renounces the law, and all confidence in the flesh, it is called *self-denial;* as it bears afflictions, it is called *patience.* All these, I say, are nothing else than the different actings of that principle of holiness implanted in the heart by the Spirit of the Lord. Thus you see why they are called a *holy seed.*

IV. The *fourth* thing in the method was, to inquire what may be imported in their being called, *the substance thereof: The holy seed shall be the substance thereof.* I answer it takes in the following particulars:—

1. That the wicked of a land are but a heap of lumber in God's reckoning, whatever be their station, quality, or estate: though they have the gold ring and the gay clothing, and may cast a great dash in the eyes of men; yet, I say, before God, and before them that have the Spirit, and spiritual discerning of things and persons, they are but so much lumber and trash. Hence is that [saying] of David, Psal. cxix. 119: "Thou puttest away all the wicked of the earth like dross." Hence, also, they are likened to chaff and tares, briers and thorns, that are "nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned."

2 It imports, that the saints, the truly godly in a land, are excellent and valuable persons; for the substance of a land lies in the things that are most valuable and excellent in it. This was David's verdict and character of the saints, Psal. xvi. 3: "My delight is with the saints, the excellent ones of the earth." And his son Solomon was of the same judgment,

Prov. xii. 26: "The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour." Yea, we have the testimony of one wiser than Solomon, even Christ, the essential Wisdom of the Father, Rev. iii. 4: "Thou hast a few names, even in Sardis, which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy." Yea, so worthy and excellent, that it is declared, Heb. xi. 38, that "the world was not worthy of them."

3. *The holy seed shall be the substance thereof*,—implies, that the saints of God are his inheritance and portion in a land: "The Lord's portion is his people: Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." He has a peculiar right and property in them beyond the rest of mankind: they are so much his, that they are not their own; and therefore have not power to dispose of themselves, but for his glory: "Ye are not your own, ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's."

4. It implies, that as they are his portion and property; so he has a great deal of pleasure in them, even as a man takes a delight and pleasure in that which is his substance. Such pleasure he has in them, that he *dwells* and *walks in them*; they are his pleasant garden, his *crown*, his *diadem*, his *bride*, his *love*, his *dove*, his *undefiled*, his *Hephzibah*, and *Beulah*: and as such he has a great deal of care about them; for "his eyes run to and fro through the earth, to show himself strong in behalf of those that fear him." As a man's eye and heart is upon his substance; so the Lord's heart and eye is upon his people, his holy seed; such a high value and esteem hath he for them.

5. It implies, that there is something in and about the godly that is not to be found among other men. The wicked, when laid in God's balance, like Belshazzar, are *found wanting* solidity; hence God's verdict of them is, "Mean men are vanity, and great men are a lie; when weighed in the balance, they are altogether lighter than vanity;" but the holy seed are the *substance*, they bear weight; and no wonder, for they are the living, while others are "dead in trespasses and sins;" they are the only seeing persons, while others are blind: "The god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not." They are wise, but the rest of the world are fools: they have oil in their vessels, but others are empty.

6. It implies, that the remnant of the truly godly in a land are the riches thereof; for a man's riches is his substance. "The precious sons of Zion" are compared unto *fine gold*; and though the world do not see it, yet their "clothing is of wrought gold; and the grace of God in them, and about them, is "gold

tried in the fire;" gold, better than the gold of Ophir. On the same account they are called *jewels:* Mal. iii. 17: "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." Whatever be the outward poverty of a house, a church, or land; yet it is really rich, if there be any of God's jewels there. Alas! they are but thinly sown in our day; though, blessed be God, there is a remnant.

7. It implies, that the truly godly are the stay and support of the land where they live. But this leads me to,

V. The *fifth* thing in the method, in what respect are the truly godly the *stay, strength, and support of a land or church?* for so some read the words; being, as I said, an allusion to the trees that grew on either side of the way to the temple, by which the earth of the cast-up-way was supported from mouldering away; and with allusion to this, it is said, *the holy seed shall be the support or strength thereof.* Now, in answer to this, how the godly are the support of a land, or church? I answer in the few particulars following:—

1. It is for the sake of the holy seed, the godly remnant in a land, that ruining judgments are deferred or removed: Is. i. 9: "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrha." Had there been but ten righteous persons in Sodom, it had been spared; and when God has a mind to let loose his hand against a sinful people, he first pulls down these pillars, removes them out of the way, and then goes on to judgment; for he can do nothing till they be out of the way, Gen. xix. 22; Is. lvii. 1: "The righteous are taken away from the evil to come."

2. It is for the sake of the holy seed, that both temporal and spiritual mercies are conferred upon a sinful people. For Jacob's sake Laban's flock increases, and for Joseph's sake, a blessing falls upon Potiphar's house and substance. And for the sake of the holy seed that are to be raised in a place, the gospel is sent to, or continued among, a people; it is upon their account that the Lord keeps his vineyard, and "waters it every moment." And when once the holy seed is gathered in, and brought home to glory, then the Lord pulls down the hedges, and lays his vineyard of a visible church waste and desolate, and forbids the clouds to rain any more upon it. And does not this say, that they are the strength or stay of a church or land?

3. The holy seed is the strength of a land, or its support, as they employ their interest at a throne of grace on behalf of a people among whom they dwell, that God may not destroy them. Thus Moses interposed with God for Israel, Psal.

cvi. 23. Abraham interposed for Abimelech and his house, Gen. xx. 17; and Samuel for the children of Israel, 1 Sam. xii. 23: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord, in ceasing to pray for you." James tells us, that "the effectual fervent prayer of the righteous availeth much." Sirs, if there were not a remnant of wrestlers in our Israel, the flood gates of fiery wrath would very soon be opened against the generation.

4. They are the strength of a land, in as much as they are instruments to check the progress of sin and defection among a people, by testifying against it. When a flood of sin and backsliding is running down, God's remnant, his holy seed, rise up and bear witness for the Lord by their walk, by their testimony, or sufferings; and in this way stop the progress of sin, which would pull down divine judgments upon a land. Indeed, the wicked inhabitants of a land do not see this, they do not consider it, and therefore they do their utmost to rid themselves of those that disturb their sinful quiet; but whether they think of it or not, yet it is a certain truth, that God's remnant, by checking the progress of sin, prevent those judgments which would certainly break out to the ruin of a sinful people. And thus they are the strength and support of a land.

5. The holy seed are the strength and support of a land in this respect, that, through their zeal for God and his cause, God's anger is sometimes diverted from a wrath-deserving people. Thus we are told, that "Phinehas stood up, and executed judgment; and so the plague of God was stayed," Psal. cvi. 30. And, Numb. xxv. 11, says the Lord there, "Phinehas hath turned my wrath away from the children of Israel (while he was zealous for my sake among them,) that I consumed them not." And, ver. 13, he is said by his zeal to make atonement for them by that act. Not that any thing done by a sinful man could really expiate the guilt of sin; but his killing of Zimri and Cozbi was a fulfilling of the law, that required such criminals to be put to death; and a public vindication of the holiness and equity of God, by which public wrath was diverted. Josiah's zeal, in reforming and destroying idolatry, by which the land was so universally defiled, had great influence in keeping off the judgments of God from the land while he lived. So by Joshua's zeal in the affair of Achan, the anger of the Lord was turned away from the camp of Israel. Thus you see, that God's holy seed are the strength and support of a land.

VI. The *last* thing in the method was the *Application*. And the *first* use shall be of *Information*.

1. From this doctrine we may easily guess when this world is to come to an end; or when a land or nation is near to destruction. Why, when the holy seed of the Mediator Christ are gathered out of the world, then the end is come, the substance of the world is gone out of it, and therefore it must be committed to the flames. Or, when God's remnant are worn out of a land, and there remains nothing but "briers and thorns, it is nigh unto a cursing, and its end is to be burned."

2. See hence, that the world are much mistaken about the truly godly, and quite out of their measures when they despise or persecute them. Why, they are the substance of the land, and who but fools will endeavour to throw away and destroy their strength and substance? when they do so, they are just like a company of madmen pulling down the pillars of a house, and bringing it down about their ears. And upon this very account the Lord says, Hos. ix. 7: "The prophets are fools, and the spiritual men are mad." Why, what was their madness and folly? They persecuted, opposed, and insnared the holy seed that was among them; and therefore it is added, ver. 8, "The prophet is the snare of the fowler in all his ways." They that despise, slight, or oppress God's people in a land, however contemptible they may be as to outward circumstances, slight their own mercy.

3. See hence, that the truly godly, though frequently they be thus branded are no enemies either to church or state. Ahab tells the prophet that he troubled Israel. The Jews said of the apostles, they turned the world upside down, and they were counted the off-scouring of all things, and the filth of the earth. It is true, indeed, the holy seed of Christ, whatever they are, are the innocent occasions of divisions and distractions; and so was Christ himself, Matth. x. 34, 35: "Think not that I am come to send peace on earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against her mother, and the daughter-in-law against the mother-in-law." And yet, for all that, neither Christ nor his seed, though they be the innocent occasions, yet are not at all the cause of these broils, divisions, and confusions, which fall out in the world, and in the visible church; no, not at all; the proper causes of these evils are the lusts and corruptions of men, which rise and swell against the truth of Christ, and the holiness of his members. Christ and his holy seed, are no more to be blamed for divisions, and confusions, and persecutions, that arise, than the poor sheep are to be blamed for increasing the wolves, or the dove for provoking the hawk to pursue it. The quarrels of the ungodly corrupt world with the holy

seed of Christ, are but like that of Cain with Abel, "he slew his brother, because his own works were evil, and his brother's righteous," 1 John iii. 12.

4. If the holy seed be the strength and stay of a nation; then hence I infer, that the ungodly crew, the seed of the old serpent, are the weakness of a nation, and the real cause of its ruin; it is they that pull down the vengeance of God upon a land. It is true indeed, the provocations of sons and daughters go near his heart: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities." But God will soon agree again with his own children, after he has chastised them, he will take them in his arms, and say, as he did to Ephraim, "He is my dear son, he is a pleasant child: for since I spake against him, I do earnestly remember him still; therefore my bowels are troubled for him; I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord." But, sirs, "God is angry with the wicked every day." "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." "The wrath of God abides upon them; and therefore they must be the weakness of a land or church, because they are continually pulling down the wrath of God upon it; being "cursed in their basket and store, in the city and field."

5. If the truly godly be the substance of a land, hence I infer the excellency of Christ, who is the substance of that substance. All the excellence that is in the saints is derived from him; he is their *light*, their *life*, their *strength*, their *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification*, and *redemption;* and in one word, he is *all in all* unto them; and therefore he himself must be exceedingly precious, above all thoughts, expression, and imagination. O let all our adoration and admiration terminate on him, saying with those, Rev. v. 12, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

6. Are the holy seed the substance of the land? see hence, what vast odds there is between God's judgment, and the judgment of our assembly now-a-days. Why, by our way of acting now in judicatories, the substance of the land is cast out, and the very scum and trash taken into its room. Lords and lairds are now, by church authority, made the substance, and almost the sole power of electing the ministers of the gospel lodged in them; while the poor godly man, though "rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom," is laid aside. According to the rules of electing ministers now-a-days, Christ, in his state of humiliation, could have had no interest in electing or appointing officers in his own house, because he had no worldly heritage; as he himself declares, "The

foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head," Luke ix. 58.

The *second* use of this doctrine may be of *Trial*. O sirs! are you among the holy seed, who are the substance of our land? Our Jacob is very low at this day; we are like a tree or oak, whose leaves are cast, that appear to have but little life; but blessed be God, I hope the substance is in it. There is here and there a branch, a sprouting twig or branch, which says there is some life in the root, or stem; although, alas! there are many withered branches that will be lopped off with the axe and pruning knife that is in the Lord's hand; yet, I say, there is a *holy seed that shall be the substance thereof*. And I will give you a few marks by which you may try whether you be among the number, yea or not.

1. Then, The holy seed, who are the substance of the land, have the seed of God abiding in them, that is always making war with sin: 1 John iii. 9: "Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." By the seed of God we are to understand the grace of God, or the new nature, a principle of spiritual life, by reason of which we cannot sin, as others do; he does not go down the tide of corruption, either within him or without, as others do; no, but he stands against the stream, he is ever making war with sin, whether it be within him or without him: "The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Wherever the grace of God meets with sin, it enters the lists with it. Try by this whether you be the holy seed that are the substance of it. "What wilt thou see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies."

2. The holy seed are a people that glory in Christ, and in him alone: Is. xlv. 25: "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." He is "the glory of his people Israel;" they look on Christ as the crown and ornament of the human nature, by whom it is raised to a higher dignity than ever it was at first creation, when adorned with all the glories of innocence. Oh! will the believer say, though I have nothing else to glory and boast of, yet "my soul shall make her boast in the Lord." Who is God, save the Lord? and who is a rock, save our God?" "Their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges." You will glory in his wisdom, under a sense of your own folly; glory in his strength, under a sense of your own weakness; glory in his righteousness, under a sense of your own guilt; glory in his life, under a sense of your own deadness; yea, the very death and cross of Christ will be your ornament: "God forbid," says Paul, "that I should

glory in any thing, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ."

3. The holy seed, who are the substance and stay of a land, are a mourning seed; they "sow in tears; and the remnant of Jacob shall be as the doves in the valley, every one mourning for his own iniquity." Hence called, "the mourners in Zion, that sigh and cry, for all the abominations done in the midst thereof." Sirs, iniquity is come to a great height; all ranks have corrupted, and are corrupting their ways more and more; a flood of defection is running: men are setting up their authority against the authority of God in his word. Now, can you say with David, "I beheld transgressors, and was grieved: Rivers of waters run down mine eyes; because they keep not thy law?"

4. The holy seed are a praying and wrestling remnant: Psal. xxiv. 6: "This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob; Selah." God is their Father, and the Spirit of adoption within them is ever sending them many an errand to a throne of grace, "crying, Abba, Father," hear and help; and in every thing they study by prayer and supplication to make their requests known unto him. Oh, sirs, there are but few wrestling Jacobs in our day!

5. The holy seed are a people that have the cause of Christ much at heart; and their hearts are up and down as the cause of Christ is stated. They prefer Jerusalem to their chief joy; and therefore, when it goes ill with the interests of Christ, they "hang their harps upon the willows, and weep when they remember Zion;" and if the cause of Christ be maintained, or flourish, their hearts rejoice, and they "sing in the heights of Zion;" and they are ever ready to lend a lift to Christ's interest.

Use *third* of *Consolation*, and *Encouragement* to the Lord's remnant in this evil day. This is the day of Jacob's trouble in the land, "a day of treading down, and of perplexity by the Lord God of hosts in the valley of vision." Men, even our spiritual men, at this day are stricken with such a fit of madness, that they are casting out the very substance of the land, and treading God's jewels under their feet, and giving them to be trodden upon, in matters that pertain to their eternal salvation, by malignant lords and lairds, up and down the land; while the holy seed, the *sacra plebs*, as they were called in the primitive times, are cast out as the dross and offscourings of all things. But here is matter of comfort: however you may be despised by men that should take a care of you; yet here, I say, you have God's verdict, the holy seed, in his reckoning, is the very substance of the land. There are these few words of comfort I offer to you:—

1. The holy seed shall be preserved in a winnowing day. The winds of error, profanity, tyranny, persecution, are beginning to blow, and, it is likely, they may blow harder yet before all be done: the Lord seems to be coming with his fan in his hand to purge his floor, and to distinguish between the chaff and the wheat. Now, here is comfort; the holy seed, which is the substance, shall not be blown away with these winds: the wise husbandman will let no more wind enter his barn-door, than serves for cleansing his seed from the chaff, or the light corn; so here, Is. xxvii. 8: "In measure when it shooteth forth, he will debate with it; he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind."

2. The holy seed shall not always be trodden upon. Indeed he may yoke the threshers to thresh his holy seed; and he may make the wheel of the cart to pass over it; but he will not always be bruising it: Is. xxviii. 28, 29: "He will not ever be threshing it, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, who is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working." "The Lord will not contend for ever, neither will he be always wroth: for the spirit should fail before him, and the souls which he hath made."

3. The holy seed will sow the land; for it is "the substance thereof, and a blessing is in it." I will give you a scripture to feed your faith and meditate upon, as to this matter, Psal. xxii. 30, 31: "A seed shall serve him, it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation. They shall come, and shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born, that he hath done this." God, like a wise husbandman, is keeping a seed of honest ministers and Christians in this time of common defection; and I would fain hope, that it is not for naught, but that he may sow his field again.

4. The holy seed shall be watered, and flourish, and sprout forth like a tree that has lost its leaves in a winter storm, it revives in the spring: "I will be as the dew unto Israel; and he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon. His branches shall spread, and his beauty shall be as the olive tree, and his smell as Lebanon." The vineyard of red wine is watered every moment, when others are dry and withered like the mountains of Gilboa: Psal. lxxii. 16; "There shall be a handful of corn in the earth upon the top of the mountains; the fruit thereof shall shake like Lebanon, and they of the city shall flourish like grass of the earth." God's work will get up again, in spite of all the stream of malignancy that is running against it at this day.

5. The holy seed shall rejoice. When the Lord turns back their captivity, it will be like streams from the south; "Weep-

ing endures for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." And they that laugh at your calamity will hang their heads, Is. lxv. 13, 14: "Behold, my servants shall eat, but ye shall be hungry; behold, my servants shall drink, but ye shall be thirsty; behold, my servants shall rejoice, but ye shall be ashamed; behold, my servants shall sing for joy of heart, but ye shall cry for sorrow of heart, and shall howl for vexation of spirit."

6. Another word of encouragement I give you under your hard treatment at this day, is, that you meet with no worse measures than Christ, and the cloud of witnesses met with before you. Are you despised and rejected of men; so was he, Is. liii. 3. The stone was rejected by the builders; and so his followers, Heb. xi. 35, 36.

The *last* use shall be of *Exhortation.* Is it so, that the holy seed of believers are the substance and strength of a land? then,

1. Let this serve to commend holiness to all hearing me; especially to you who have been at a communion-table, making an open profession of being the holy seed, before God, angels, and men. Sirs, if you have any kindness for the land you live in, as you would avert impending judgments, or recover us from that current of defection we are running into, study to be holy yourselves, "in all manner of conversation," and to promote and advance holiness among others; for it is the *holy seed*, that is the *substance.*

2. Another word of exhortation I offer to you, is, to trust, and hope, and wait upon the Lord, in this dark and cloudy day: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee. Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Sirs, there is no standing in this shaking and trying day, but by faith: "We walk by faith, and not by sight." And, to encourage your trust,

1*st*, Consider his near relation to you as your Goel, your kinsman. Who will not trust such a near friend?

2*dly*, Consider how he has avenged your quarrel upon the old serpent.

3*dly*, You are commanded to trust in him at all times.

4*thly*, It is pleasing to the Lord to be trusted; it is the work of God: it is like the embraces by the infant, of a mother's breast, when gorged with milk.

5*thly*, Consider the advantages of trusting him in an evil day. (1.) Perfect peace: Is. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee." (2.) Joy, filled with joy in believing. See

Hab. iii. 16—18. (3.) Provision in famine: Psal. xxxvii. 3: "Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." (4.) Protection in time of danger, Psal. xci. 2—4, &c. (5.) Stability like mount Zion: Psal. cxxv. 1: "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." (6.) Increase of grace and the waterings of the Spirit: Jer. xvii. 7, 8: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river."

3. Another exhortation to God's holy seed, is, to be much in wrestling at a throne of grace, and in improving your interest for the land and church in which we live, that deserved strokes may be averted. Tokens of God's anger are to be found; his anger has divided us; his anger has made to withdraw his Spirit from ordinances and judicatories; the clouds are bound up, the fruits of the earth withered, and famine at the door; Oh wrestle and pray for floods and water to the dry ground.

Motive (1.) You do not know how far you may prevail with a prayer-hearing God. Moses' prayers prevailed to deliver Israel; Asa prays against the Ethiopian army; Jehoshaphat prays against the Ammonites; and he is the same prayer-hearing God this day as ever.

(2.) Although you should not prevail to avert wrath, yet your prayers will not be lost, they shall return into your own bosom; you shall either deliver your own souls, or God will hide you from the common calamity.

(3.) Consider how active sinners are to pull down wrath, and bring ruin upon the land. Men are active this day, as if they were weary of their mercy; wearied of Christ, of the gospel, and of the privileges of it; weary of his saints. Men seem to be upon a plot to ruin a covenanted work of reformation. Now, when others are active this way, should not we be active?

4. Another exhortation. If it be so that the holy seed is the substance and strength of the land: then beware of touching them to do them hurt; do not malign, traduce, oppose, or oppress them; and beware of joining in a confederacy with such as are casting out those who are rich in faith, for those who are rich in this world, though they be strangers to the power of God and godliness. Value and prize them as the stock and substance of the land.

Motive (1.) Consider that Christ has given a strict charge to all respecting them, not to do them injury; they that touch them, touch the apple of his eye; Matth. xviii. 10: "Take

heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

(2.) Consider whose they are; they are the children of a King, and therefore it is *lese*-majesty to hurt them.

Object. They are but factious and turbulent persons. *Answ.* Take care that you do not wound a real saint, under the notion of a hypocrite; and take care that you do not reckon all hypocrites, that do not run in the same way with yourselves.

(3.) You will pay for it, for the injuries you do them;" "Their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name." It is dangerous meddling with them that have great friends and allies: so here, God is their Father, angels their ministering spirits, heaven their inheritance; and therefore beware of hurting them.

I conclude with a few advices to saints, the substance of the land.

1. Bless God that made a difference between you and others. By nature you are children of wrath, as well as others.

2. Beware of despising others, yet in a natural state: "Remember the rock whence you were hewn, and the hole of the pit whence you were digged." Study to be of Agur's temper, Prov. xxx. 2, 3: "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy."

3. *Lastly*, Let God's holy seed keep at the greatest distance from sin. "Be blameless and harmless, the sons of God without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom ye shine as lights in the world." The least flaw in your conversation will soon be ripped up, and made to ring through the world.

SERMON XXIV.

THE FIRST PROMISE ACCOMPLISHED;

OR,

THE HEAD OF THE SERPENT BRUISED BY THE SEED OF THE WOMAN.*

For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.—1 John iii. 8.

To gain time, I shall entirely abstract at present from the connexion of these words with what went before, or what follows, and consider them just as they lie before us, in regard they make one complete and entire sentence as they stand. And they are the same in substance with the first gospel that ever was preached in the world, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent:" only, with this difference, that what was delivered to our first parents, in a way of promise and prophecy, is here delivered to us in a way of history, as a thing now done and accomplished. And, in this respect, there is more said in these few words, than all the prophets under the Old Testament could say. They could only tell the world, that Christ was to be manifested in the fulness of time; but now, says our apostle John here, this is not a thing to be done; no, but it is done, it is a thing accomplished, it is now over and past; the Messiah is come, and has bruised the head of the serpent: *For this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* O! should not such glad tidings of great joy make every one of us who hear it join issue with the angels at his birth, and cry, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth, peace, good-will towards men?" or, with the church, Psal. cxviii.: "Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord to save us?"

The words, in general, are a declaration of the great designs of the appearance of the Son of God in this lower

* Preached on occasion of the celebration of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper at South Queensferry, Sabbath, August 12, 1733.

world in the nature of man, namely, to be avenged on the grand enemy of mankind, and to overturn his usurped empire as the god of this world; "For this purpose was the Son of God manifested." Where we may notice these two or three things:—

1. The great champion who takes the field, and appears in the quarrel of fallen man; and he is no less a personage than *the Son of God.* I remember the church, Is. lxiii. 1, when she hears tell of a Saviour coming to rescue a lost world of mankind sinners, she cries, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" Here you have a pointed and positive answer to this inquiry; it is none other than the *Son of God.* But O! "who shall declare his generation?" or who can frame to pronounce his great and glorious name; for it is a "name above every name," a name "at which every knee must bow, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord," *the Son of God.* This is he who under the Old Testament, was known sometimes by the name of the "seed of the woman, the seed of Abraham, the Shiloh, the man of God's right hand, Immanuel, the branch of righteousness, the plant of renown, the messenger of the covenant, the sun of righteousness, the ruler of Israel, whose goings forth are of old, from everlasting; and who, in the New Testament, is called the "Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of man, the sent of God the Mediator, the Redeemer" of lost sinners. O sirs, let "his name be as ointment poured forth" to you; for "the virgins love him."

2. We have the grand enemy this renowned champion had in his eye, and that is the *devil, the old serpent,* the head of the apostate angels; he and his confederated spirits, who had commenced a rebellion against God, their great Lord and Creator, for which they were tumbled out of the glories of heaven, into the depths of hell, and laid "under chains of darkness, in which they were reserved unto the judgment of the great day." Sirs, here is matter of surprise and wonder. Our guilty consciences would have been ready to tell us, upon hearing of the coming of the Son of God to this lower world, that his errand would have been to be avenged upon rebel man, who had renounced his allegiance to God, and joined against him in a covenant with hell, and in an agreement with death: we might have expected to have heard him saying, "Ah, I will ease me of these mine adversaries, and be avenged on mine enemies" of Adam's family. But, to the eternal surprise of heaven and earth, he takes the field, not against fallen man, but against fallen angels, who had ruined man, by drawing him into the same condemnation with themselves.

3. We may notice the way and manner how the Son of God takes the field against these enemies. He does not make his attacks upon him in a secret and clandestine manner, he does not lay a secret ambush, or steal a dint of the enemy unawares; no, but he acts in an open and fair way, he is *manifested.* He proclaimed war against him in paradise, and gives the enemy four thousand years to prepare himself for battle, before he actually takes the field against him in person; so that the enemy cannot say he wanted warning, or was taken in a surprise. Every prophet raised up under the Old Testament was a herald sent before the renowned Captain of salvation, to give devils and men warning of his approach; they "proclaimed the acceptable year of the Lord" to lost man, but "the day of vengeance" upon fallen angels, and all the wicked world, who keep by them.

4. We have the stated ground and design of the war commenced against this enemy; it was to *destroy his works: For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* The grand plot of hell was to ruin the works of God, to disturb the creation, to deface the image of God, and to set up his empire in these lower regions: being cast out of heaven, he would set up his throne upon earth, and reign without control as the god of this world. But now, the purpose of the Son of God was to counteract the enemy, to sap and overturn the foundation of his usurped kingdom, and to set up and establish his own and his Father's authority among the sons of men; *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

The text itself is a distinct doctrine, namely, *That the Son of God was manifested for this purpose, to destroy the works of the devil.*

The method I design, through divine assistance, is,

1. To offer some things with relation to this renowned champion, the Son of God, who espouses the quarrel of fallen man.

II. Of the grand enemy, the devil, against whom the combat and war is carried on.

III. Of the manifestation of the Son of God.

IV. Of the works of the devil, and how they are destroyed by the Son of God.

V. Apply.

I. The *first* thing is, to *speak a little of our renowned champion the Son of God.* Sirs, our great work, who are ministers of the gospel, is to raise his glory, and to bear his name

among the Gentiles, that sinners through the knowledge of him may be brought to break their covenant with hell, and put their trust under the shadow of his wings. Only, before I proceed, I would advertise you, sirs, that by the fall of Adam, the whole tribe of mankind are become the captives and prisoners of this mighty enemy, the devil, here mentioned in the text. Immediately upon the breach of the first covenant, which denounced death against the soul that sinned, a hand-writing was given out by divine justice, by which we were delivered over to the power of the devil, as God's great jailer and executioner; and accordingly, the devil, having a legal right and power, carries away all mankind as his slaves and captives, tying us fast to his service with the chains of our own lusts. Hence is that description of sinners in their natural state, Eph. ii. 2, 3, where we are told, that they "walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." Now, sirs, there is your condition and mine, while in a natural state. Every man by nature is the devil's lawful captive; he comes into the world wearing the devil's livery of original sin, and he is led about in the devil's service in the chains of his own lusts and depraved nature. I remember there is a strange and surprising question put, Is. xlix. 24: "Shall the prey be taken from the mighty, or the lawful captive delivered?" Angels and men could not answer this question, till the renowned champion in the text, the Son of God, appears and resolves it; and you see what was his answer to that stunning and confounding question, ver. 25: "Thus saith the Lord JEHOVAH," in the person of his eternal Son, "Even the captives of the mighty shall be taken away, and the prey of the terrible shall be delivered: for I will contend with him that contendeth with thee, and I will save thy children." And my text is just a farther opening of what is there said; *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

Now, this premised, I come to offer you a few thoughts respecting the Son of God, our glorious deliverer.

1. Then, He is a person of a noble extract and pedigree, as you see in the text; he is the *Son of God* by eternal generation, his Father's *first-born*, and therefore higher than the kings of the earth." It adds much to the character of a general, when it can be said of him, that he is a son, or a cadet, or the representative of such a noble or royal family;

and should it not contribute to commend the Captain of our salvation, that he is the *Son of God*, the brightest ornament of the family of heaven, yea, the very "brightest of the Father's glory," and that he and the Father are one God?

2. This renowned person, the Son of God, had an ancient kindness for our family and tribe; for he from eternity "rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men." And his kindness to our family made him, in the council of peace, when he saw us in distress, offer his service to his eternal Father, on our behalf, saying, "Lo, I come: I delight to do thy will, O my God."

3. That he might be in a capacity to help and relieve us from the hand of the enemy, he matches with our family, he marries our nature into a personal union with himself. Law and justice required that the same nature that sinned should suffer; and that he who should be our Redeemer, and the avenger of our blood upon Satan, should be our nearest of kin: "He was made a little lower than the angels," that he might "still the enemy and the avenger." So that our Goel, our kinsman, is the avenger of our blood; according to that of the apostle, Heb. ii. 14: "He took part of the children's flesh, that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil."

4. This renowned champion, the Son of God, who takes the field alone in our quarrel against Satan, is one of a very martial and heroic spirit; he fears no enemy that stands in his way. Is. lix. 16—18; see there with what an heroic spirit he takes the field, though none of Adam's family, or yet of the family of angels, could join him in the enterprise: "And he saw that there was no man, and wondered that there was no intercessor: therefore his own arm brought salvation," &c.

5. He is one that is successful in all his enterprises; he never lost a battle, victory follows him in his train and retinue. Wherever he goes, he stains his raiment with the blood of his enemies, like one that treadeth in the wine-fat; for he "treads them in his anger, and tramples them in his fury." When death the king of terrors encounters him, he cries, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction." When the armies of hell encounter him, he spoils them, and leads them about in triumph, and makes his ignominious cross a triumphant chariot, to which he ties them as so many trophies of his victory; he "casts death and hell into the lake of fire and brimstone." And hence it comes, that this very name is the terror of hell; for "things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, bow at the name of Jesus."

6. He is incomparable for power and wisdom; hence his name is "Christ the power of God, and Christ the wisdom of God." For power, he has "all power in heaven and earth," and therefore none is able to withstand him. Who has an arm like him? "His hand is full of power, and his right hand is great in might." And, for wisdom, "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him: The cunning of the old serpent is but folly to him: "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and turns the counsel of the froward headlong." So much for the *first* thing, some thoughts concerning our renowned champion, the glorious Son of God, who appears in the quarrel of lost sinners of Adam's family.

II. The *second* thing was, to *offer a few thoughts concerning the grand enemy of mankind, that the Son of God had in his eye when he appeared upon the stage, and that is, the devil.* Concerning this enemy, I shall only tell you,

1. That he was once an angel of light, and had his habitation at first in glory. The apostle Jude insinuates this, when he tells us, that they "left their first habitation." He was one of the brightest stars in the higher orbs of heaven, Is. xiv. 12, called "Lucifer, the son of the morning."

2. Pride and ambition was the sin of the devil. So much is hinted to us by the apostle; "being lifted up with pride, he fell into condemnation." He valued himself upon his own created excellencies, and would needs vie with God: he said in his heart, "I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like the Most High," Is. xiv. 13, 14. Some think, that the thing that gave occasion to his pride to vent itself, was the intimation of God's design of taking upon him a nature inferior to that of angels, in the person of his eternal Son, and the order given that, "all the angels of God should worship him," even in that nature, when he should bring his first-begotten into the world. He disdained to worship God in a nature inferior to his own, for which he was tumbled from heaven to hell, with all the angels that joined him in his apostacy.

3. Being cast out of heaven, he was filled with the madness of revenge and enmity against God; and finding our first parents in paradise, "crowned with the glory and dignity" of the divine image, he, through his flattering hisses, draws them into a confederacy with himself against God, by tempting them to eat of the forbidden fruit, whereby they and their whole posterity had perished for ever with the devils, under the weight of the wrath and curse of God, unless the Son of God had interposed to "destroy the works of the devil," and to set the captives of the mighty at liberty.

4. By virtue of the curse of the broken law, the devil comes to have a legal title to, and dominion over, every son of Adam by nature. The hand-writing, which was issued out against us, upon the violation of the holy law, gave the devil a power from God, in a way of righteous judgment, to rule in and over every man and woman springing of the first Adam; hence called *the god of this world*. So that, sirs, till you join yourselves to the Son of God by faith in him, you are just the devil's lackeys to serve him according to his beck and inclination; you do his works, as was hinted before.

5. The enemy, into whose hands we are fallen, is of all others the most dangerous and terrible. And, that you may know your danger while under his power, and the obligations we are under to the Son of God who came to destroy him, I will tell you in two or three words what sort of an enemy he is.

1*st*, He is a very powerful enemy: for though he has lost his original integrity, yet he has lost nothing of his natural strength; if he were not under the check of the power of God, he could in a very little time devour all mankind, and hurry them wholly to hell.

2*dly*, He is a subtle and cunning enemy; therefore called a *serpent*, which is the most subtle and cunning of all the beasts of the field. He suits his temptations to every man's temper: he knows well what bait is most ready to catch the unwary sinner.

3*dly*, He is an experienced enemy. He has long dealt in his soul-ruining and murdering trade; he has now had about six thousand years' experience in this business.

4*thly*, A most vigilant enemy. He leaves no stone unturned, he loses no opportunity to carry on his hellish designs against the glory of God, and the salvation of souls.

5*thly*, He is a most fierce and raging enemy; hence we are told, that he is *a roaring lion*.

6*thly*, He is a numerous enemy. It is true, he is here spoken of in the singular number; but his name is *Legion*. Although there be but one Beelzebub, the prince of devils, yet he has a numerous train under him, continually carrying on the plots of his kingdom of darkness. And, sirs, I make no doubt, if our eyes were opened, we would see swarms of evil spirits in this company, and in this very place, all at work to divert the minds of men from giving entertainment to the gospel revelation. Thus I have given you some account of the enemy the Son of God had in his view when he appeared on the stage.

Now, you may be ready to ask, What are the works of the

devil which the Son of God came to destroy? *Answ.* The grand and fundamental work of the devil is sin. This is, as it were, his first born, and the beginning of his strength, as you see from the former clause of the verse: "He that committeth sin, is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning." And then it follows, *For this purpose the Son of God was manifested*, &c. So that the main work of the devil is sin: this is just the poison and venom of the old serpent. The flood, that he casts out of his mouth, in order to destroy the church represented under the notion of a woman, Rev. xii. 15, what else is it but a flood of sin? This is the main engine by which the devil carries on all his other hellish works and stratagems either against God or man. If it had not been for sin, the devil had never got any power over men in the world; so that sin is the very seat and strength of his kingdom in the world. I remember it is said, that "justice and judgment are the habitation of God's throne;" and I may add, that iniquity and sin is the habitation of the devil's throne and empire. And here I might tell you of a multitude of sins, which are evidently the works of the devil, if I were not afraid of entering upon a field large and wide like the heavens. Atheism is the work of the devil; he studies to persuade men that there is no God to call them to an account, no judgment to come, no hell nor heaven. Ignorance is a great work of the devil; he "blinds the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ should shine into their hearts." Hence his kingdom is called the kingdom of *darkness*. Unbelief is the work of the devil, which is nothing else but a "making God a liar," a discrediting of a God of truth, speaking either in a way of promise, precept, or threatening, in his word. It was by unbelief that he ruined our first parents, he brought them to doubt if God had said so and so. And when once a man begins to waver and question whether this or that be a point of the truth of God, he is gone, the enemy has him fair before the wind. Enmity is another work of the devil: "The carnal mind is enmity against God." This is just the poison of the old serpent, that has run through all the powers of the soul. Pride is a work of the devil, yea, it is the very picture of the devil. Pride was his first sin; and by telling them that they should be *as gods*, by eating the forbidden tree, "knowing good and evil," he ruined them and their posterity. This sin of pride has so much of the devil in it, that God cannot look near a proud man; he "beholds the proud afar off." Hypocrisy and dissimulation, either with God or man, is another work of the devil. He himself dissembled the matter with our first parents, he transformed himself into an angel of light: and so does every hypocrite, he

appears to be what he really is not. Idolatry, superstition, charms, witchcraft, error, swearing, lying, Sabbath-breaking, murder, adultery, theft, covetousness, perjury, and all sin that I can possibly name, are all the works of the devil, and they that commit them are of the devil.

But now, to illustrate this head yet a little farther, I will tell you of some works of the devil brought about by sin, which are just the devil's sport and recreation. 1. The dishonour of God. 2. The disturbing of the creation. 3. The ruin of man. 4. The erection of his own kingdom of sin and darkness.

1. I say, the devil by sin designs the dishonour of God, every sin being a violation of his law, a contempt of his authority, a denial of his sovereignty, an affront to his justice and holiness, and a casting dirt upon all his perfections. Now, what a sport and pleasure is it to that proud and rebellious spirit, when he can get men and women to join him after this manner in affronting God, and trampling upon his laws? hence sinners are said to be in a *covenant* or confederacy *with hell*, to dishonour God.

2. By sin he disturbs the creation, and disorders all the works of God in this lower world. You know, from Gen. i. when God had made the heavens and the earth, and all the rest of the creatures, he pronounced them all good: every thing was in its proper joint and lith, subservient to the great ends of their creation; not a jar or groan to be heard among all the creatures of God. But now, Satan, by sin, disturbs and disorders the creation of God. Having tempted man to break his allegiance to God, he brings the curse of God upon the very ground, and all the inferior creatures that stood in a subordination to man. Hence follows war between man and the inferior creatures; and the creatures that are subject to man, it is unwillingly that they serve him; they groan under it, as a servitude, that they should be any way useful to man, a rebel against their great Lord and Creator; hence is that of the apostle, Rom. viii. 20—22. It is just the pleasure and diversion of the devil, to see that order, and beauty and harmony, that God placed in the creation at first, disturbed.

3. By sin he brings about the ruin of poor souls, which is as great a pleasure and diversion to the wicked spirit, as it is for a lion to tear and devour his prey when he is hungry. To illustrate this to you, I will tell you of some things the devil does to you when he gets you to sin, which are just the work and sport of the devil.

1*st*, He takes away our sight. The god of this world blinds all his votaries by sin; so that, though the man is as it

were just upon the mouth of hell, yet does not know it. Like the Philistines, he puts out our eyes, and then makes a sport of us.

2*dly*, By sin he takes away our beauty. Man, before sin entered, shined with the beauties of holiness; but now by sin we are become hell-hued, black like the Ethiopian, by lying among the devil's pots; and this is the work and sport of hell.

3*dly*, He takes away our clothing, he leaves us stark naked. Man, before sin entered, was clothed with a robe of perfect law righteousness; but when through sin we fell into the hand of the devil, he stripped us of that ornament; hence Laodicea is said to be "wretched, miserable, blind, poor, and naked," without a rag to cover her.

4*thly*, He takes away our strength and ability for any good work; so that we are not sufficient to conceive a good thought, though it could purchase heaven. "When we were without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly."

5*thly*, He takes away our peace with God, and confidence towards him; as you see in our first parents immediately after the fall, they fled from the presence of God as an enemy; the Almighty became a terror to them, that they durst not look him in the face.

6*thly*, He takes away peace with conscience, God's deputy in the bosom. The devil has a continual hell in his breast, through his guilty conscience; only it is some pleasure and ease to him, to see men and women through sin feeling his own smart, and crying with Cain, "My sin is greater than can be forgiven."

7*thly*, He takes away our life; for every sin is a thrust given to the life of the soul. And the devil, who murdered himself, and who is a murderer from the beginning, just takes pleasure to set men and women at work to murder both soul and body at once, every sin being a draught of the poison of the old serpent put in the man's hand.

8*thly*, He takes away our title to God and glory, and makes us children of wrath, and heirs of hell and the curse with himself. These are some things that the devil works by sin, which are just his pastime and recreation. To all which I add,

4. In the *fourth* place, that another work of the devil by sin is, to establish his own kingdom and empire, in opposition to God's government. And indeed, by the first sin, he drew all mankind under his dominion. He takes God's viceroy in this lower world (man, I mean,) whom God had "made a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and dignity;" he not only makes him his drudge and vassal, but he arms

him against God, his righteous Lord, and makes him "say to the Almighty, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." And thus you see what are the works of the devil. All these works Christ came to destroy. But now I go on to,

III. The *third* thing, which was the *manifestation of the Son of God, in order to his destroying these works of the devil.* There is something in this phraseology of the text that is exceedingly significant and emphatic; he was *manifested to destroy the works of the devil:* importing, that the devil and his works do, as it were, disappear at the very sight or appearance of the Son of God, as darkness disappears and vanishes at the manifestation of the light of the sun. The devil and his works can no more stand at the approach of Christ, than darkness can stand before the sun when shining in the heavens in his strength. Now, to clear this, I will tell you of several gradual manifestations of the Son of God, every one of which is a stroke given to the devil and his works.

1. He was manifested initially in the first promise, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent;" which, as I said before, is the very same in substance with this of his being manifested to destroy the works of the devil. This first promise contained a manifestation of Christ; and in it were three things manifested concerning the Son of God. As, (1.) That he should be clothed with man's nature, and be born of a woman. (2.) That he should have his human nature bruised by the serpent and his seed; "Thou shalt bruise his heel." (3.) That the head of the serpent, or the power of Satan and his usurped kingdom, should get a mortal wound by the sufferings of the human nature of Christ. Here was the first manifestation of the Son of God. To the same purpose was that manifestation of him made to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed:" and upon this manifestation did the patriarchs feed for the space of about two thousand years; and all the following manifestations of Christ, were but farther and gradual openings of the mysteries of the grace and love of God contained in these two promises.

2. He was manifested typically to the children of Israel in the Mosaic economy. The tabernacle, the temple, the passover, the manna, the rock that followed them, the sacrifices and ceremonies of that dispensation, what else were they but the "shadows of good things to come?" The apostle calls them the "rudiments of the world," by which they were let in to the knowledge of Christ, in his person, natures, and offices. And,

3. To this there was added a prophetical manifestation of the Son of God. The prophets, what were they but so many heralds or harbingers sent before this great King to tell that he was coming? Jacob on his death-bed prophesied of him under the name of *Shiloh*, to whom the gathering of the people should be: Moses prophesied of him as the great *prophet* that God should raise up like to himself, &c.: David prophesied of him under the name of the *Son of man*, whom God would make strong for himself, and the *King* whom he would set on his holy hill of Zion; Isaiah speaks of him as the *branch* that should spring out of the root of Jesse, that should stand for an ensign to the Gentiles, and a root springing out of a dry ground: Jeremiah, as the *Lord our righteousness*: Ezekiel, as the *plant of renown*. Daniel calls him the *Messiah*; Malachi as the *messenger of the covenant*, that should come unto his temple. Thus, I say, all the prophets prophesied of him: "To him bore all the prophets witness."

4. He was manifested personally in the fulness of time, by the assumption of the nature of man: Gal. iv. 4: "In the fulness of time God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law." All the former manifestations of Christ were but like the gradual peepings of the light of the day; but now the *Sun of righteousness* actually *arises* on the world, *with healing under his wings*. By his doctrine, his miracles, his obedience to the law, and death on the cross, and his resurrection and ascension again into heaven, he lays the foundation of a new gospel-church within the territories of the god of this world. Of this more afterwards. But by this manifestation of the Son of God, a dead stroke was given to the kingdom of darkness, and the foundation of a happy eternity laid, by "finishing transgression, making an end of sin, making reconciliation for iniquity, and bringing in an everlasting righteousness" for the justification of sinners before God, and giving them a new title to eternal life, forfeited in the first Adam.

5. There is a declarative manifestation of the Son of God in the dispensation of the gospel. The apostles, and other ministers of Christ, are sent out as so many heralds to proclaim and intimate to a lost world, that the great Redeemer and Saviour is actually come; and that, having done his work, "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." We preach Christ crucified, and tell you, that "he that believeth in him shall be saved: and he that believeth not shall be condemned."

6. He is manifested sacramentally. He not only presents himself to our understandings by the ear in the dispensation of the word, but also to our eyes in the sealing ordinances of

baptism and the Lord's supper; and more especially in the last, where, by the elements of bread and wine, his body and blood are set before us, that we may discern him, and feed upon him as an incarnate God, dying, or pouring out his soul unto the death for our redemption.

7. Christ is manifested in a spiritual and efficacious way and manner in the day of conversion. "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into the heart, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." "It pleased God," says Paul, "to reveal (or to manifest) his Son in me." This is called by the prophet, Is. xxv. 7, a "rending of the veil, and a destroying of the face of the covering;" because, in the conversion of a sinner, the first saving work of the Spirit is to destroy ignorance and unbelief, and to testify of the glory, fulness, suitableness, and excellency of the Lord Jesus to the soul, by which it is determined to cast off the devil's livery, and to put on Christ for righteousness, and to say to him as a king, "O Lord, other lords besides thee have had dominion over me, but by thee only will I make mention of thy name." I might tell you also of the renewed manifestations of Christ to the soul, posterior to these at first conversion: for Christ, having begun to give the light of the knowledge of his glory to the soul, "his goings forth are prepared as the morning;" he is always refreshing the soul with the other blink of his reconciled countenance, by which he weakens the interest of Satan in the soul, and *changes* it gradually "into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord."

8. There is the public and solemn manifestation of the Son of God at the last day, spoken of, Rev. i. 7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him, and they also which pierced him: and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of him."

Thus you see how it is that the Son of God is manifested; and in every one of these manifestations (or, if there be any other that I have not named) he had in view the destruction of Satan and his works. By his manifestation in the first promise, we have reason to think that both Adam and Eve, but especially the last, were converted; and so the foundation of the patriarchal church laid in the midst of Satan's kingdom. By his manifestation to Abraham, under the name of the promised seed, through whom he engaged to be a God to him, and to his seed, the foundation of the Jewish church was laid: and upon the foundation of this promise the Mosaic economy was founded, and all the prophecies of the prophets, by which the church was continued till the days of Christ. By the actual manifestation of the Son of God in the nature

of man, and his obedience, death, and resurrection, the foundation of the New Testament church was laid; and such a stroke given by his after manifestation in preaching of the gospel, accompanied with the power of the Spirit, that the works of the devil fell down apace through the world, the Heathen oracles silenced, the idolatrous and gross abominations which Satan had erected in the world overthrown, and multitudes every where converted to the faith of Christ, submitting as volunteers to his sceptre of righteousness, like drops of dew from the womb of the morning. But now I proceed to,

IV. The *fourth* thing proposed in the method, which was, to *speak of the Son of God destroying the works of the devil.* And here I would, 1. Prove that it is the great business of the Son of God to destroy the works of the devil. 2. Show how it is that he destroys them. 3. When it is especially that he destroys them. 4. Why.

The *first* thing is, to prove that it was the great business of the Son of God to destroy the works of the devil. This is evident from the whole current and tenor of the scriptures from the beginning to the end of them, Gen. iii. 15, he was to *bruise the serpent's head.* No sooner did he enter upon his mediatory work, Matth. iv. but he enters the lists with this enemy, and foils him with the sword of the Spirit. By his death he is said to have *spoiled principalities and powers.* He threw him out of the souls and bodies of men when upon earth; and, by the preaching of the everlasting gospel, his kingdom falls like the lightning from heaven. And, Rev. xii. we read of a war between Michael and his angels, and the devil and his angels. But now this will be farther cleared by the induction of a few particulars.

1. Was it the plot of hell, to have God dishonoured and affronted in all his attributes and perfections by the sin of man? Well, Christ counteracts the devil in this; for he brings a greater revenue of glory to the crown of heaven by the work of redemption, than could ever have accrued to it by all the service that men or angels could have done to God through all eternity; hence it was that the angels, immediately upon Christ's appearing in the world, cry, "Glory to God in the highest." O the bright displays of the divine attributes in him, who is "the brightness of the Father's glory!"

2. It was the work of the devil, to disgrace the holy law of God, by breaking it himself, and teaching man to break in upon it: but the work of Christ is, to "magnify the law, and to make it honourable." "Think not," says Christ, "that

I am come to destroy the law: I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil it." He himself fulfilled it as a covenant, and establishes it as a rule to all his followers, and puts his Spirit within them, causing them to walk in his statutes, and to do them.

3. Was it the work of the devil to disturb God's government in the world, and to cast all into disorder and confusion? Well, God the Father lays the government upon Christ's shoulders, he puts the reins of administration in his hands, on purpose that he may restore every thing into the order wherein he had set them at first: and at the end of the day, when he has done his work, it will be a "time of restitution of all things;" and the very creatures long for that happy day, Rom. viii. 19, &c.

4. Was it the devil's work, to establish his own kingdom of darkness in this lower world, by establishing error, ignorance, unbelief, atheism, pride, carnality, profanity, and all manner of sin and wickedness? Well, it is the work of Christ to pull down these pillars and strong holds of Satan's kingdom: Dan. ix. he shall "finish transgression, and make an end of sin." And in the 5th verse of this chapter, where my text lies, "And ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins; and in him is no sin. His name is Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins."

5. Was it the devil's work, to break all fellowship and friendship betwixt God and man? Well, it is the work of Christ, to bring them into fellowship and friendship one with another; therefore he is called a Mediator, or a Peacemaker. His work is "to make reconciliation for iniquity: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by his death: God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." Yea, Christ himself becomes "a new and living way," by which God comes down unto us, and we come up unto God, and have "our fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."

6. Was it the work of the devil, to bring man under the curse and condemnation of the law, that so he might be in the same condition with himself? Well, it is the work of Christ, to "redeem us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And they who believe in Christ, being wrapt up in his righteousness, there is no condemnation to them, nothing can be laid to their charge.

7. Was it the work of the devil, to deface the image of God which he stamped upon man? It is the work of Christ, to restore it; and for this end he manifests himself in the glass of the gospel, that we, by *beholding* of *his glory*, may be "changed into the same image from glory to glory."

But, not to insist upon particulars, Christ just "restored what he took not away," but what the devil and sin took away. Satan spoils us of our light and sight; Christ comes to "open the blind eyes, to give light to them that sit in darkness, and in the region of the shadow of death." Satan spoils us of our beauty, and rubbed the hue of hell upon us; Christ takes them that have "lain among the devil's pots," and makes them "like the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." Satan strips us naked; Christ clothes the poor sinner with "white raiment," with the "garment of salvation," and the "robe of righteousness." Satan spoils us of our strength; but Christ makes his strength sufficient for our weakness, makes the feeble as David, so as to resist the devil himself, and to put him to flight. Satan spoils us of our peace with God, and peace with conscience; but Christ restores both: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you: and a peace that passeth all understanding." Satan takes away, through sin, our title to God and glory; but Christ restores this again with advantage, and settles our claim to God as our God, and to the inheritance of glory, upon a better foundation than the claim that the first Adam stood upon. In a word, the devil, and his first-born (sin,) took away our spiritual life, and leaves us "dead in trespasses and sins;" but Christ restores life to the dead: "I am the resurrection and the life; and, He that believeth in me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living waters." And then he himself becomes the continual fountain of their life, and their "life is hid with Christ in God." Thus then you see that it is a clear truth, that Christ the Son of God destroys the works of the devil.

The *second* thing here is, to inquire, how is it that Christ destroys the works of the devil? I answer, Christ destroys the works of the devil four ways. 1. By the virtue of his blood. 2. By the light of his word. 3. By the power and efficacy of his Spirit. 4. By the prudence of his government and administration.

1. I say, Christ destroys the works of the devil by the virtue of his blood. Now, when I speak of the blood or death of Christ, I understand the whole of his sanctification, including his perfect active obedience to the mandatory part of the law, as well as his suffering the minatory part of it in his death. Now, I say, by the death of Christ, in this extensive view, Satan and his works are destroyed. This, of all others, to our sense and reason would appear to be the most improbable; and yet it was the best, and the only way how it could

be accomplished. The power of Satan, and his whole destroying works, are founded in sin; the obligation of the sinner to death, by virtue of the curse of the law, was that which gave him all his power to destroy and ruin lost sinners; and therefore, if that obligation be destroyed, Satan's power and all his works of darkness must of course dissolve; the foundation being destroyed, all that is lying upon it must fall to the ground. Now, this was done in the death of Christ; justice was satisfied, reconciliation made for iniquity, the sinner redeemed from the curse, he being made a curse for us; and whenever the sinner by faith closes with Christ as crucified, or comes to the blood of sprinkling, the sentence passes, Rom. viii. 1: "There is, therefore, now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus."

2. Christ destroys the works of the devil by the light of his word. This is that weapon which is "not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds, to the casting down of imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of Christ." When Christ sent out his disciples to preach the gospel through the cities of Israel, Satan's kingdom fell down before it like lightning; and when Christ sent out his apostles through the world, in order to overturn the kingdom of Satan, the weapon he put in their hand was just the word of the gospel; "Go teach all nations; Go preach the gospel unto every creature;" go manifest the Son of God, and what he has done and suffered for the redemption of sinners. And, accordingly, they went and preached the gospel of the kingdom; and, such was the power that accompanied it, that the idolatries of the nations fell down apace before it. It is very observable, that, upon the very external manifestation of the gospel, the gross works of the devil fell down. In the time of Paganism and Popery, the devil used to appear and converse with men and women in a familiar way, and they worshipped and served him as though he had been a god; but, upon the entry of the gospel, he quitted that gross way of doing, and betook himself to a more secret and subtle way of ruining souls, by fostering them in security, pride, enmity, unbelief, and such spiritual wickednesses. And wherever the gospel comes with power, he is driven out of these high places also.

3. Christ destroys the works of the devil by the efficacy of his Spirit, by whom the virtue of his blood, and evidence of the word, is carried in upon the soul; for it is the Spirit that applies to us the redemption purchased by the blood of Christ, and manifested and exhibited in his word. There could be no efficacy in the word, in itself considered, for destroying the works of the devil, without the concurring power of the

Holy Ghost, who, upon this very account, is called a "Spirit of power: Not by might, nor by the power of man, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." And O, when the Spirit of the Lord comes along with the revelation and dispensation of the word, then the devil's prisoners are loosed, the captives of the mighty are delivered, and the soul that was bound for many years with the devil's chains is raised up, and made "partaker of the glorious liberty of the sons of God."

4. Christ destroys the works of the devil by the prudence and wisdom of his government and administration, of which you have an account, Is. xi. 2—4, &c. Christ is given as a head of government to his church, and the sceptre of power is put in his hand, a rod of strength, and a rod of iron, by which he dashes his most powerful enemies in pieces as a potter's vessel: he is "made head over all things unto the church, which is his body." And, that he may be in better capacity to manage the reigns of government for the benefit of his mystical body, and the great ends of their salvation, "all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; so that his administration is unerring and infallible. Satan, the old serpent, and his agents, are continually plotting the ruin and overthrow of the interest of Christ in the world; sometimes by fraud, and sometimes by force and violence, they endeavour to make the work to cease, and never more than at the present time; but Christ, by the prudence, wisdom, and energy of his government, counteracts all the deep-laid plots of the gates of hell, so that they never have, nor ever shall be able to prevail to the overthrow of his work and interest; "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and turns the counsel of the froward headlong." Thus, you see how it is that Christ destroys the works of the devil.

The *third* thing was, to condescend upon some particular times and seasons in which Christ destroys the works of the devil.

1. The day of Christ's death gave a notable blow, as I told you just now, to the devil's kingdom; for then he "spoiled principalities and powers, and made an open show of them" before God and the holy angels. Men and devils, to the world's view, were triumphing over Christ; but Christ at the same time was triumphing over them before the invisible world of spirits. The "hand-writing that was against us," and from which the devil derived all his authority and power in this world, was torn and cancelled.

2. The day of Christ's resurrection gave a signal blow to the works of the devil; for he "rose for our justification." The devil, the Jews and Romans, thought they had obtained the victory over Christ, when they got him in the grave, and

his stone sealed: but "he was taken from prison and from judgment;" by an order from heaven, the stone was rolled away from the door of the sepulchre, and he comes forth carrying the spoils of death and hell in his hand, and carrying also the discharge of the debt of a whole elect world in his hand, &c.

3. The day of Christ's ascension into heaven was a notable destruction to Satan and his works; for "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive;" he opened a passage between this world and heaven, through the territories of the prince of the power of the air, by which all his friends might follow him to glory. And O how did it torment the devil, when Christ went through the air in triumph with his "twenty thousand chariots of angels," every one crying, "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet: sing praises to God, sing praises; sing praises unto our King, sing praises!"

4. In the day of Pentecost Christ gave another stroke to the devil and his works. When Christ newly sat down on his throne of glory, poured out his Spirit upon his apostles in an extraordinary manner, enabling them to work miracles, and to preach the gospel in all languages, that it might spread through all the known world; how did Satan's kingdom begin to fall, when at one sermon three thousand souls were plucked out of his kingdom, and added to the church of Christ! And, from that time forward, how did the light of the gospel fly like lightning from one end of the world (as it were) to the other, insomuch, as the apostle observes, Rom. x. 18, "their sound (in a little time) went unto the ends of the earth?" And to this I may add, that when at any time the renowned Captain of salvation "girds his sword upon his thigh, and rides prosperously" in his chariot of truth, "making the people to fall under him," convincing and converting sinners unto his knowledge and obedience, that is a time when Christ destroys the works of the devil, and pulls down his strong-holds.

5. The day of a sinner's believing in Christ is a time when Satan's works are destroyed. It is a great design of hell, to slander God and his word among the children of men, as though he were not worthy of credit: thus he slandered him to our first parents: *Hath God said* so and so? Now, when a sinner is brought to "set to his seal that God is true," and is made to give such credit to the record of God, that he ventures his eternal salvation upon the veracity of a God of truth; this, I say, is just a stab (as it were) given the devil's heart, who "abode not in the truth" of God himself, and cannot endure to see any poor sinners abiding in it. The same

I may say with respect to every renewed act of faith on Christ, upon the footing of the promise of a God of truth; hence we are told, that it is by *faith* as a *shield* that we "quench the fiery darts of Satan."

6. Times of espousals, nearness betwixt God and a soul, are times of destroying the works of the devil. It was the great plot of hell, as you heard, to separate between God and man; and how doth it gall that enemy to the heart, when he sees himself defeated, and the poor soul, that was through his means put *far off* from God, *brought* so *nigh* to him, that he is just taken up, and taken in to the "chariot of the wood of Lebanon," and made to "sit down under his shadow with great delight," having the *banner of love* displayed over it? Sirs, every new manifestation of the Son of God to the soul gives a wound to Satan's interest in the soul; it weakens unbelief, pride, carnality, hypocrisy, enmity, and the other branches of the body of sin and death.

7. When at any time an honourable testimony is given to the Lord, to the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of his church, in a day of uncommon defection and backsliding. It is the great work of the devil to sow the tares of error, and corruption, and tyranny, and discord, and division in a church; and when these evils are "coming in like a flood," the Lord inspirits any of his saints or servants to lift up the banner, and to testify against these works of the devil, and to dismantle them of their fair colours under which they are carried on; this, I say, torments the devil, and those that live under his government, as you read, Rev. xi. And Christ's kingdom and interest in all ages of the world, particularly in this church, has been maintained by a faithful witnessing for the Lord and his way, in opposition to errors, and corruptions, &c.

8. When a believer dies, and goes away to glory, under a guard of angels, along that lane or road that Christ opened when he ascended, to take possession of these vacant thrones that the devil deserted, when he "left his first habitation;" what a vexation is it to that proud spirit, to see the poor believer, whom he tossed and tempted many a day in this lower world, going up in a triumphant manner to sit down on the throne he himself once sat upon!

The *fourth* thing here was, to give the reasons why Christ the Son of God is manifested to destroy the works of the devil. To this I answer in these particulars:—

1. Christ encounters this enemy, and destroys his works, because it was his Father's will and pleasure; and he did always these things that pleased his Father, rejoicing always before him. "I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy

law is within my heart. I lay down my life of myself; this commandment have I received of my Father." The devil by his works had affronted and dishonoured the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Christ rejoiced to resent his Father's quarrel upon this enemy.

2. Christ destroys the works of the devil, because it was for his own honour to engage in this expedition. There is a new revenue of glory accrues to the crown of Christ, as Mediator, by this undertaking. All the ransomed in glory, through eternity, will be celebrating the glory of his achievements, by which "through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." Hence the ransomed, Rev. v. 9, cry, "Worthy art thou to take the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood."

3. Christ destroys the works of the devil, out of the ancient and wonderful love that he bore to man upon earth, particularly to that remnant of Adam's family which were given him by the Father from all eternity. It was the love of the Father that sent him, and it was the love of the Son that made him come to deliver us out of the paw of the roaring lion, when we were ready to be devoured by him. "He loved me," says Paul, "and gave himself for me." And O the love of Christ in this matter, it passes all understanding.

4. Out of regard to his own law, which the devil by his works had dishonoured. The devil made it his business to abrogate and abolish the law of God from among the children of men, that it might not be the rule of their actions; and such is the devil's spite and malice against Heaven, that, if it were possible, he would not leave the least print of it in the world: but now, Christ had such a regard for the honour of the law, that he would magnify it, and make it honourable," both as a covenant and as a rule; "I came not to destroy the law, but to fulfil it."

5. Christ destroys the works of the devil, that he may "still this enemy and avenger." When the devil had so far prevailed, as to deface the image of God upon man, to bring him under the curse, and to draw him into a confederacy against God with himself, he thought that he had carried the day, and that now man, and all this lower world, was his own; and he was no doubt saying, like proud Pharaoh, "Now will I divide the spoil;" I will tear, and devour, and rage as I have a mind. But how is this enemy stilled, silenced, and confounded, when he sees all his game spoiled, and his kingdom ruined, his head bruised, by the "child born," and the "son given to us," whose name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace!"

6. He destroys the works of the devil, for the illustration and manifestation of all the divine perfections. The wisdom of God is manifested in outwitting all the policy of hell, and "taking the wise in their own craftiness, and turning his counsel headlong:" the power of God, in "spoiling principalities and powers," and in bringing life out of death, and light out of darkness, salvation out of misery, and "glory to God in the highest" out of that which had the greatest tendency to dishonour him: the holiness of God, in expressing the greatest hatred and indignation against sin, as the abominable thing which his soul hates: his justice, in the execution of the penalty of the law upon the Surety, and justifying the ungodly upon the footing of a better righteousness than ever Adam had before he fell: the goodness, love, and mercy of God, in "finding a ransom," that we might "not go down to the pit:" his truth and faithfulness, in taking care that the threatening of the law should be fulfilled in the sufferings of Christ, and in fulfilling that ancient promise of the seed of the woman bruising the serpent's head, after the delay of four thousand years; the accomplishment of which is a glorious security for his accomplishing every other promise of the word. Thus you see why the Son of God destroys the works of the devil.

V. The *last* thing in the method was the use of the doctrine, which I shall despatch in the following inferences:—

1. See hence a glorious ray of the Godhead or supreme independent Deity of the glorious Redeemer. Why, he is here expressly called the "Son of God," the second person of the glorious Trinity, one God with the Father: and the work here ascribed to him declares him to be none other than the *mighty*, yea, the *almighty God:* for who else could destroy the works of the devil? He is "God manifested in the flesh, the great God, God blessed for ever, and God over all;" his name is JEHOVAH, "most high over all the earth."

2. See hence how the kindness and love of God has appeared toward man upon earth. Why, here is the greatest evidence of it that was possible for God to give; he sends his own Son upon an expedition into this lower world, arms him with his power and authority, as the Captain of salvation and Redeemer, to avenge his own and our quarrel (which, in his infinite wisdom, he knits together) upon that Abaddon and Apollyon, the devil, the deceiver and destroyer of mankind: when he gave him his commission, he promised to support him, that his arm should be with him, &c., in order to bruise the head of that enemy.

3. See hence the evil of sin, and the folly of those that are in love with it, and give themselves up to its power and ser-

vice. Why it is just the work of the devil, his main work, and the strength of his kingdom. What a pitiful thing is it to be the devil's drudge, to do the devil's work, to lick up his vomit, and the poison of the old serpent!

4. See hence a good reason why the believer is at war with sin in himself, and wherever he finds it. Why, he takes it up as the "work of the devil" that Christ came to destroy; and therefore he denounces war against it, wherever he finds it. He has enlisted himself a volunteer under Christ in a day of power, to help down with the works of the devil all that he can; and therefore he resists the devil and his temptations to sin, "resists even unto blood, striving against sin."

5. See hence what is the ground of that strong opposition that is made at this day against the settlement of honest ministers through Scotland. Why, the devil, and those that take part with him, are afraid that, if a faithful ministry were settled in congregations, Christ the Son of God would be manifested in the dispensation of the gospel, and his works in the hearts of sinners would be destroyed. What a melancholy thing is it to see the interest and influence that the devil has at this day, even in the judicatories of the church, to employ that power, which they have derived from Christ, against his, and for the devil's interest! The devil knows well enough, that that man who is thrust in upon a people without and against their will, is never like to do his kingdom harm: and therefore he pushes on men under his influence, to carry on the settlements of congregations with a high hand, with lax, little-worth young men, that have little or no knowledge of the devices of the devil, or of the work of grace upon their souls. If the devil see a man whom God has qualified with gifts and grace for preaching the gospel, for edifying souls, or pulling down the devil's kingdom, he will set all his forces against that man, and reproach him as a turbulent dangerous man, that would turn the world upside-down.

6. See hence whence it is that the testimony of the witnesses, Rev. xi. is said to "torment them that dwell upon the earth." By "men that dwell upon the earth," is just meant men of earthly sensual spirits, the "men of the world, whose portion is in this life;" they are sunk in this earth, and have no just notion of the things of heaven, or the things of the kingdom of Christ; men under the power of the god of this world. Why, a testimony for Christ, and his injured cause, cannot miss to torment them, because it disturbs the strong man in the peaceable possession of the house, it discovers the ways and works of the devil that men are promoting; and this cannot fail to gall, and vex, and torment them: and there-

fore all care must be taken by those who are on the devil's side, to bury the witnesses and their testimony also.

7. See hence why hell and earth took the alarm when Christ appeared in the world; or we may see an answer to that question, Psal. ii. *Why do the heathen rage?* Why, it is against the Lord's Messiah, who came to *destroy the works of the devil.* You know, if a foreign enemy enter a kingdom, the king and all his subjects will take arms to oppose him: Christ was a foreigner, he came to invade the devil's kingdom, and set up his own.

8. See hence why the devils cried out when Christ was upon earth, "Art thou come to torment us before our time?" and why the devils *believe and tremble.* Why, they know that Christ is to destroy all their works, and this torments them. The name of the Son of God is the terror of hell, because he "finishes transgression, and makes an end of sin," by which his kingdom falls in the world.

9. See the mystery of the conversion of the thief upon the cross. Why, Christ would show his power and ability to destroy the works of the devil in a poor soul, and to pull a captive out of his hand, even when he seemed to be at the lowest, or when he was really in the lowest step of his humiliation.

10. See hence, that we in this land and generation, cannot miss a sharp stroke from the Lord. Why, the works of the devil are prevailing in our day; error, ignorance, unbelief, pride, fulness of bread, idleness, atheism, security, cursing, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, contempt of the gospel, barrenness under the means of grace; yea, we are come that length, that even in the established church, and in the courts of Christ which are constituted in his name, *iniquity* is *established by a law,* by which the avowed enemies of the interest of Christ have their hand and power set up, and the poor members of Christ are oppressed and cast out, as though they were the dross and off-scourings of the earth. Sirs, there seems to be a formed design and conspiracy among the prophets in our day, to crush and suppress all that have the least show of serious religion and godliness. Now, I say, when the works of the devil so much prevail, and men are (as it were) avowing the devil's works, and defending them, have we not reason to think that the Lord will *visit for these things,* and that he will some way or other be "avenged on such a nation as this?" When sinners will maintain and support the works of the devil among them, in opposition to the manifestation of the Son of God in the gospel; when they turn a *deaf* ear, and *pull away the shoulder,* and refuse obedience to his laws; then commonly he manifests himself in a way of

some awful providence, he puts on his terrible majesty, and clothes himself with vengeance, to destroy these rebels, Matth. xxii. Matth. xxiii. at the close, their *house was left unto* them *desolate*, and they and their temple, city, and nation, utterly destroyed, because they would not receive the Son of God, manifested first in the flesh, and then in the ministry of his apostles.

11. See one great reason why believers breathe so much after manifestations of the Lord: "O that I knew where I might find him! O to see thy power and glory, as I seen thee in the sanctuary! O when wilt thou come unto me?" Why, here is one great reason for it, because by the manifestation of Christ, the works of the devil in their souls are destroyed. Sin, ignorance, unbelief, pride, enmity, and the other parts of a body of sin, get a wound by Christ's appearing and manifesting himself: all these locusts of hell are either killed, or obliged, like wild beasts, to creep into their holes, and disappear, when the Sun of righteousness begins to shine. And to this I may join another inference, namely, It lets us see why believers weary so much in the Lord's absence, and cry for his presence. Why, while he is absent, the "enemy comes in like a flood," the works of the devil get up their head, and this is the burden of the poor soul.

12. From this doctrine we may see how much it is our common duty to keep up the memorials of a Redeemer's death, and why the truly godly love to flock to a sacrament. Why, by the death of Christ, especially, a dead stroke was given to the kingdom of Satan and his works, and therefore they love to show forth his death till he comes again; and because in this ordinance the Lord frequently manifests himself to the souls of his people, so as he does not manifest himself to the world. By viewing him, and his death and blood in that ordinance, they get fresh courage to fight their way through the wilderness, knowing that "through death Christ has destroyed him that had the power of death."

Use *second* may be of *Trial*, whether the Son of God was ever savingly manifested to thy soul. Sirs, here is a touchstone to try your manifestations, whether they be genuine: why whenever Christ is manifested in a saving way, the tendency of it is to destroy the devil's works; for, *for this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.* Hence is that intestine war that the believer finds in his breast after he comes once to know the Lord. "What wilt thou see in the Shulamite? as it were the company of two armies. The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh." Many a heavy groan goes up to heaven from the heart of the believer, when he

finds the works of the devil prevaling in his soul! "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from the body of sin and death!"

1. If ever the *Son of God* was *manifested* in thy soul, if ever the "light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, shined into thy heart," thou wilt be always clear for pulling down the works of the devil, and for building up the works of the Son of God. Here I might tell you of several works of the devil that you will study to pull down, and some works of Christ that you will study to build up.

1*st*, You will pull down self-righteousness, and put on the righteousness of Christ. Self-righteousness is one of the main works of the devil. Indeed, it is hard to convince a man that is obeying the law as well as he can for his life and acceptance before God, that he is working the devil's work: no, you will sooner fasten a conviction upon publicans and harlots than upon him, because he thinks he has the law of God on his side; and then, when he is obeying the law, he thinks he is doing God a service, and working the works of God. But, sirs, allow me to tell you, that, if you be obeying the law for life, righteousness, justification, or acceptance before God, you are working the devil's work; for you are making a Christ of your obedience, you are justling Christ out of his room, who was "made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." And as long as a man is doing so, he is affronting the Son of God in his priestly office, rejecting the righteousness and satisfaction of Christ, and putting his own filthy rags in the room thereof, as the Jews did, Rom. x. 3: "They went about to establish their own righteousness, and would not submit unto the righteousness of Christ." That man or woman, in whom Christ has been savingly manifested, casts away his or her own righteousness as *filthy rags*, and cries, "Surely in the Lord have I righteousness; in him will I be justified, and in him alone will I glory:" or with Paul, Phil. iii. 8, 9: "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss and dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

2*dly*, You will be much employed in pulling down the image of the first Adam, and in setting up the image of the second Adam in your souls. By nature we bear the image of the first Adam, which lies in the darkness of the mind, rebellion of the will, and carnality of the affections. Now, if ever the Son of God was savingly manifested in thy soul, it will be thy great care and exercise to have this destroyed. And, in-

deed, here is the main exercise of the Christian: he groans under remaining darkness of mind, and is ever striving to have more of the knowledge of God, and of his mind and will; he breathes after the "excellency of the knowledge of Christ," and is always "following on to know the Lord," &c.; he groans under the rebellion that is in his will, and remaining enmity, and strives to have his will in every thing brought up to the will of God, both of precept, providence, and grace: he groans under the carnality of his affections, and is ever striving to have them brought off from the vanities of this world, and "set upon things above, where Christ is at the right hand of God." Thus the man is never at rest while he finds any thing of the hue of hell about him; his constant care and concern is, to be "changed from glory to glory."

3*dly*, You will be clear for pulling down the wisdom of the flesh, and for setting up the wisdom of God above it. I remember, Gal. i. 16, the apostle Paul tells us, that "so soon as it pleased God to reveal his Son in him, he consulted not with flesh and blood;" that is, he would no more make carnal wisdom and policy the rule and measure of his actions, but he studied "in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not in fleshly wisdom, to have his conversation in the world." Sirs, carnal wisdom and policy is the very thing that is ruining the church of Scotland at this day. What but carnal wisdom and policy has brought us to make acts and laws in the church of Christ that are quite ruining and destructive of the true church of Christ, and which have no manner of foundation in the word of God? I mean particularly the late act of assembly, by which the "precious sons of Zion, comparable unto fine gold," are cast out from the privilege of electing ministers; and the "men of this world, whose portion is in this life, and have their belly filled with the hid treasures" thereof, are mostly taken into their room. The precious pearls of Christian privileges are by acts of assembly cast before the swine of this world, who will turn about, and persecute and rend the church whenever an opportunity is put into their hand in providence. This, I am very sure, is one of the devil's works established in the church of Scotland; and, if ever the Son of God was savingly manifested in thy soul, it will be a grief of heart to you to hear it told in Gath and Ashkelon, and that the *daughters of the uncircumcised* are *triumphing* to hear tell of it; I say, it will be matter of sorrow and mourning to you.

2. If ever the Son of God was manifested savingly to thy soul, the union of the two natures in the person of Christ will be the wonder of thy soul. Hence Paul, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." And it will be matter of praise when you think

that God, in the person of the Son, is wearing the nature of man, and that in thy nature he has done every thing necessary for our redemption.

3. It will be your great design, in attending ordinances, to have new manifestations of his glory, as David, Psal. xxvii. 4; Psal. lxxxiv.; Psal. lxiii. &c.

4. You will be concerned to manifest his glory to others, according to your sphere and station; as the spouse to the daughters of Jerusalem; and as Paul, his great intention was, to "make known the savour of his name in the world," &c.

The *last* inference is this, Is it so, that the Son of God was manifested? See hence noble encouragement to all honest ministers and Christians to make a stand against the defections of the day we live in; particularly against these violent ways that are taken to settle Christian congregations with a set of lax, little-worth ministers; and that act of assembly, by which the rights of the Lord's people are violently wrested from them, and given into the hands of men disaffected to the government both of church and state. Why, this method is a plain work of the devil, to defeat the great designs of the gospel; and therefore we may run all hazards in opposing them. Though men may discountenance and cast us out, yet the Son of God will own us in opposition to them; for, *for this purpose was the Son of God manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.*

SERMON XXV.

COURAGEOUS FAITH.*

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.—PSAL. XXIII. 4.

The words which I have read are large and copious; and therefore, to gain time, I shall entirely wave any preamble, drawn either from the connexion, or from the penman, oc-

* Preached after the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's supper at South Queensferry, on Monday, August 13, 1733.

casion, or principal parts of the psalm, and come close to the words themselves.

In general, we may take them up as the language of a victorious and triumphant faith, viewing the countenance of a reconciled God in Christ, trampling upon all the imaginary evils of a present world, yea, death itself, as things "not worthy to be compared with the glory to be revealed." *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil,* &c. Where we may notice the particulars following:

1. The present condition of the believer while in this world; he is considered under the notion of a traveller, for he is *walking* towards his journey's end. 2. We have the supposed danger that may cast up in his way or walk; he may come to the *valley of the shadow of death;* that is, he may meet with troubles in his way, that carry the show or appearance of the greatest dangers, yea, even of death in them. 3. We have the courage with which faith inspires the believer, upon this supposed event of being obliged to walk through the valley of the shadow of death; *I will fear no evil,* says faith. 4. We have the ground of this courage and confidence, which is expressed two ways. (1.) More generally, *Thou art with me.* (2.) More particularly, *Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.* And thus we have the words resolved into their several parts. I shall not stay at present upon any critical explication; what is needful will occur.

From them I notice the following doctrines:—

Observe, 1. "That believers are not resident in this world, but travelling through it to their own home." Hence David here speaks of his present condition under the notion of a traveller walking through a valley.

Obs. 2. "That believers in their journey must lay their account with melancholy, yea, death-like dispensations, trials that portend death and ruin." Hence David supposes that he may walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

Obs. 3. "That true faith inspires the soul with an undaunted courage to encounter all imaginable dangers in the way." See with what a heroic spirit David here expresses himself, under the influence of the Spirit of faith; *I will fear no evil.*

Obs. 4. "That which gives so much courage to the believer is, that by faith he takes up a reconciled God present with him in the midst of his greatest troubles." *I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.*

Obs. 5. "The consideration of God's pastoral care and providence toward his people is very comfortable in the midst

of trouble." For in this sense some understand the words, being, they think, an allusion to a shepherd, who with his rod and staff protects and defends his flock against wolves and such ravenous beasts.

Obs. 6. "The faithfulness of a promising God is a comfortable rod or staff in the hand of faith, to bear up the believer in his travels through the wilderness." In this sense others take the words; for by the *rod* and *staff* they understand the divine promises, and the faithfulness of the Promiser, to which faith leans with confidence, in opposition to all staggerings through unbelief. Thus, you see, the words cast up a large field of matter, which it is not possible for me to overtake at present.

The doctrine I insist upon at present is the third in order, namely:—

Doct. "That true faith is a courageous grace; it inspires the soul with a holy and undaunted boldness amidst the greatest of dangers." Or, you may take it thus: "That true faith is a noble antidote against intimidating fears in a time of trouble." This you see plain in the words. David, here, being under the influence of the spirit of faith, cries out with a holy fortitude of spirit, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.*

The method I propose is,

I. To notice some of these evils that are ready to intimidate the spirits of the Lord's people, when they look on them with the eye of sense and reason.

II. Give some account of faith, and prove that it inspires the soul with courage and boldness amidst all these evils.

III. Give some account of that Christian fortitude and boldness that is the fruit of faith.

IV. Inquire into the influence of faith upon this boldness and fortitude of spirit, and how it prevents intimidating fears amidst these evils.

V. Make some improvement of the whole by way of application.

I. The *first* thing in the method is, to *notice some of these evils that are ready to intimidate and discourage the hearts of the Lord's people in a time of danger.*

1. Then, Sometimes their spirits are ready to be stricken with [illegible] of their own weakness and insufficiency for the work in which the Lord is calling them to engage, whether it be working out their salvation, or doing the work of their station and generation. Jer. i.—there the Lord tells the prophet, (ver. 5,) "Before I formed thee in the belly, I knew thee;

and before thou camest forth out of the womb, I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." By this hint, Jeremiah is made to understand that the Lord was about to send him a very dangerous errand. Well, the prophet, through a sense of his inability in himself to manage such a hard work, cries out, ver. 6, "Ah, Lord God, behold, I cannot speak, for I am a child." His heart fails him in such an undertaking, and he is afraid to meddle with it. The same we see in Moses, when the Lord called him to go to Pharaoh king of Egypt, and require him to let the children of Israel go out of his dominion: Exod. iv. 10, what an impertinent apology makes he for himself, through the prevalency of unbelief? "O my Lord, I am not eloquent, neither heretofore, nor since thou hast spoken unto thy servant; but I am slow of speech, and of a slow tongue." Yea, after the Lord had chastised him for his unbelief, and given him a special promise of assistance, yet he adds, ver. 13, "O my Lord, send, I pray thee, by the hand of him whom thou wilt send." From all which it is plain, that sense and reason foster unbelieving discouragements in the work of the Lord; and no wonder, for they look only to the fund of created grace within, but not to the strength and grace that is in Jesus Christ, secured by a well-ordered covenant.

2. The spirits of the Lord's people are ready to be frightened with the might and multitude of the enemies they have to grapple with in their way through the wilderness. This world is a *den of lions*, and *mountains of leopards*, where the believer must engage with *principalities* and *powers*. He is many times like a besieged city, surrounded with dangers from all quarters; and in this case he is ready to cry with Jehoshaphat, 2. Chron. xx. 12: "We have no might against this great company that cometh up against us:" or, like the house of David, moved like "the trees of the wood," because of great and dangerous enemies that pursued them. Sense and reason look only to the power of the enemy, but overlook the power of God; and therefore cries, One day or other I shall fall by the hand of my enemies.

3. The spirits of believers are sometimes intimidated with a sense of guilt, and the awful terrors of vindictive anger and wrath pursuing them on the account of sin. Hence David cries out, Psal. xl. 12: "Innumerable evils compass me about," &c. So, Psal. xxxviii. 5; Job vi. 4: "The arrows of the Almighty are within me," &c. Heman, Psal. lxxx[illegible]15: "While I suffer thy terrors, I am distracted." When sin presents itself to the soul's view, and the Saviour is out of sight, it remembers God, and is troubled;" and no wonder though

in that case he cry out, "If thou, Lord, mark iniquity; O Lord, who shall stand."

4. Sometimes they are struck with fear through the prevalency of indwelling sin, enmity, unbelief, ignorance, carnality, and the like; swarms of heart-lusts, like an impetuous torrent, break in upon them; in which case they fear lest they be carried away to the dishonour of God, the ruin of the soul, and the wounding of religion. This made David to cry, Psal. xix. 12, "Who can understand his errors?" Psal. lxv. 3, "Iniquities prevail against me," &c. Paul, Rom. vii. "I am led captive unto the law of sin. Wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of sin and death?"

5. Sometimes their hearts are intimidated with the black clouds of desertion, that overcast their sky, and interrupt the sweet manifestations of the love of God. In that case, they are like the disciples on mount Tabor; when, after a sight of the glory of Christ, the cloud overshadowed them, then they were afraid: or like David, Psal. xxx. 7: "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled;" immediately after he had been saying, "Lord, by thy favour my mountain stands strong, I shall never be moved."

6. Sometimes their hearts are intimidated with the noise of *great waters*, I mean, the shakings and reelings of this lower world. Sometimes providence hath such an awful aspect as if it were going about to shake heaven and earth; the mountains are removed, and cast into the midst of the sea, and the "waters thereof roar" and swell; the "mountains melt," and the "perpetual hills bow" at the presence of the Lord, when he appears in his terrible majesty. In such a case as this, the prophet Habakkuk, chap. iii. 16, cries out, "When I heard, my belly trembled: my lips quivered at the voice: rottenness entered into my bones." And David, Psal. cxix. 129, says, "My flesh trembleth for fear of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments."

7. Sometimes they are afraid at the wrath of man, and the fury of the persecutor. Sometimes the Lord, for holy and wise ends, lets loose the seed of the serpent, the rage and fury of man, under the influence of natural enmity; and, in this case, they are ready to be stricken with a sinful and slavish fear, Is. li. 13: "Thou hast feared every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy."

8. The dangerous situation of the church and cause of Christ is sometimes matter of fear to the saints of God. When the ark of God was in the open field, Eli's heart fell a trembling. When men are allowed to *lift up* their *axes* upon the *carved work* of the temple, when the "boar out of the wood," and the "wild beast of the forest are devouring" the

Lord's vineyard, and the "foxes spoiling the tender vines;" then, and in that case, the true children of Zion are ready to say with the church, Lam. i. 10, "The adversary hath spread out his hand upon all her pleasant things; for the Heathen have entered into her sanctuary, and her stones are poured out in the top of every street."

9. Sometimes we find them stricken with fear at the thoughts of the awful approach of death the king of terrors; as we see in the case of Hezekiah, when the sentence of death was passed upon him, Is. xxxviii. 10, &c., "I said in the cutting off of my days, I shall go to the gates of the grave: I am deprived of the residue of my years. I said, I shall not see the Lord, even the Lord in the land of the living: I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the world. Like a crane or swallow, so did I chatter: I did mourn as a dove; mine eyes fail with looking upward: O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me." Some are said to be held in *bondage* all their days *through fear of death.* Thus I have told you of some of these evils that are ready to intimidate the hearts of the Lord's people.

II. The *second* thing is, to *give some account of that faith which fortifies the soul against the fear of these evils.* I do not design at present to insist upon the nature of faith, having not long ago insisted on this subject: only I offer you, 1. Some of its names. 2. Its ingredients. 3. Some of its concomitants.

First, I offer a view of it in its scriptural names. Sometimes it is called a *trusting* in the Lord: "What time I am afraid, I will trust in thee: Though he should slay me, yet will I trust in him." Sometimes it is called a *looking* to the Lord: "They looked unto him, and were lightened.—Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth.—Let us run our race, looking unto Jesus." Sometimes a *staying* ourselves on the Lord: Is. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee," &c. Sometimes a *casting* of our burden on him: Psal. lv. 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee." Sometimes it is called a *fleeing* to him as a refuge, as the manslayer fled to the city of refuge when pursued for his life: Psal. cxliii. 9: "Deliver me, O Lord, from mine enemies: I flee unto thee for help." Faith is a fleeing in under the wings of Christ's mediation and intercession, as the birds under the wings of the dam.

Secondly, I would give you some of the ingredients of that faith which fortifies the soul against the fear of evil.

1. Then, It has in it a knowledge and uptaking of a God in Christ, revealing himself as reconciled, and making over himself to us in a well ordered covenant: for it is only a God

in Christ that can be the object of our faith and love; and "they that thus know his name, will put their trust in him."

2. It has in it a firm and fixed persuasion of the truth and certainty of the whole revelation of his mind and will, in the word, and particularly of his promises, as yea and amen in Christ. Hence Abraham's faith (Rom. iv.) is described by a persuasion; he was "fully persuaded, that what he had promised, he was able also to perform." And it is said (Heb. xi. 13,) of the Old Testament worthies, who died in faith, "They saw the promises afar off, and were persuaded of them."

3. It has in it an application of the promises to the soul itself in particular; so that it not only looks on it as true in general, but true to me. The man finds the promise indefinitely endorsed to every man to whom it is intimate, Acts ii. 39. "The promise is unto you, and to your seed, and to all that are afar off," &c., attended with this declaration and promise, that "whoever believes sets to his seal that God is true:" and that "whosoever believeth, shall not perish:" therefore the man takes it home to himself in particular, as a security for all the grace that is contained in it, saying, "I believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ I shall be saved: God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice:" and "In this will I be confident."

4. It has in it a persuasion of the power, love, and faithfulness of the Promiser. A persuasion of his power to do as he has said; as Abraham, Rom. iv. he was "persuaded that what he had promised, he was able also to perform." A persuasion of his love: "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God!" &c. A persuasion of his veracity and faithfulness, that "he is not a man, that he should lie, neither the son of man, that he should repent."

5. It has in it a renouncing of all other refuges, as entirely insufficient to shelter the soul against those evils with which it is surrounded: Hos. xiv. 3: "Ashur shall not save us; we will not ride upon horses; neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, ye are our gods:" Jer. iii. 23: "In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, or multitude of mountains."

6. An expectation of help and safety from a God in Christ, against all these evils that the man is pursued with: Psal. lxii. 5, 6: "My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him. He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be moved." Psal. cxlii. 4, 5: "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared

for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord: I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living."

7. This faith has a leaving of ourselves and all our cares and concerns upon him, to be disposed of according to his will and pleasure. The man is content to take what lot God in his providence shall see fit to carve out for him: 1 Sam. xv. 25, 26: "The king said unto Zadok, Carry back the ark of God into the city: if I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation. But if he thus say, I have no delight in thee: behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him."

Thirdly, I will give you a few of the concomitants of this faith which guards the soul against intimidating fears in a time of danger.

1. Then, It is accompanied with a blessed quietness and tranquillity of soul, amidst all the dangers of a present life. Hence says the Lord to his people, Is. xxx. 15: "In quietness and in confidence shall be your strength." The man having run in under the wings of Shiloh, the perfections of a God in Christ, he cries with David, "I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety," Psal. iv. last.

2. It is accompanied with a waiting upon the Lord, in a way of duty, for his gracious presence either in grace or providence: "He that believeth, does not make haste. The vision is for an appointed time; though it tarry, wait for it," &c. Mic. vii. 7: "I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my salvation," &c. Psal. cxxx: "My soul waiteth for the Lord, like them that wait for the morning," &c.

3. It is ever accompanied with prayer, earnest prayer, at a throne of grace. Faith having got the promise in its arms, runs straight to a throne of grace with it, to sue for the promised blessing, Psal. lxii. 8: "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him." Prayer is just the breath of faith; and to pray, and not to believe, is to beat the air; and to believe, and not to pray, is nothing but a presumptuous confidence, that will never bear a man through in the evil day.

4. It is accompanied with a holy obedience or regard to all God's commandments: Psal. cxix. 166: "I have hoped for thy salvation, and done thy commandments. Show me thy faith by thy works," Jam. ii. 18. Let us never pretend to believe the promise, if we do not keep his commandments: Psal. l. 16, 17: "Unto the wicked, God saith, What hast thou to do to take my covenant in thy mouth? seeing thou hatest instruction," &c.

5. It is frequently accompanied with a soul-ravishing joy

in the Lord: Is. xii. 2: "Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust and not be afraid:" and then it follows, "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." Psal. lxiv. 10: "The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory." 1 Pet. i. 8: "Whom having not seen, we love; in whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Hab. iii. 17—19, &c. Thus I have given you some account of that faith that fortifies the heart against the fear of evil.

I shall now endeavour to prove, and make it evident, that faith does indeed inspire the soul with a holy boldness and courage, or that it is a noble antidote against these intimidating evils that threaten danger. And this will appear from the following particulars. The courage of faith appears,—

1. From that serenity wherewith it possesses the soul amidst these evils and dangers that threaten it with utter ruin: Psal. xxxii. 6, 7: "Surely in the floods of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto him. Thou art my hiding-place, thou shalt preserve me from trouble: thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Psal. xxvii. 3, 5: "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear: though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident. For in the time of trouble he shall hide me in his pavilion: in the secret of his tabernacle shall he hide me, he shall set me up upon a rock." The man, through faith, like Noah, sings in the very midst of the waves, without fear of being swallowed up.

2. The courage of faith appears in the hard work and service that it will adventure on when the Lord calls. O, says faith, when it hears God saying, "Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Here am I, send me: I can do all things through Christ strengthening me:" he has promised to bear my charges, and therefore "I will go in his strength," &c.

3. From the enemies and dangers that it will look in the face without being daunted. The three children, when the wrath of the king was like the roaring of a lion against them, threatening them with a burning fiery furnace seven times heated, their faith enabled them to a holy and indifferent boldness: "We are not careful to answer thee, O king, in this matter: the God whom we serve will deliver us."

4. The courage of faith appears in the bold and daring challenges that it can give to all enemies and accusers. Says Paul, Rom. viii. 32, 33, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" The challenge is universal in respect of all accusers, in respect of all accusations, and in respect

of all the accused; "Who can lay any thing," &c.? And then you have another challenge of faith in the close of that chapter, "Who shall separate us from the love of God? shall tribulation, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or peril?" &c.

5. From the weapons which it wields, which no other hand but the hand of faith can manage. The "sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God," that is the weapon with which faith deals. With this weapon, Christ the Captain of salvation, teaches us to fight by his own example, Matth. iv.: "Thus and thus it is written." And it is the truth and faithfulness of God in his word, that is the shield and buckler by which faith encounters its enemies.

6. From the battles it has fought, and the victories it has gained over the stoutest and strongest enemies. "This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith." It resists the devil, and makes him to flee like a coward; it presents the blood of the Lamb, and bears witness to the truth of the word, and so it defeats the old serpent, Rev. xii. 11: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony." It treads upon death as a vanquished enemy: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" Thus faith puts to flight the armies of the aliens.

7. From the heavy burdens it will venture to bear upon its back, without fear of sinking under the load. The cross of Christ is a burden that frightens the world to look to him, or own him; but faith takes it up, and takes it on, and cries, O the world is mistaken; for "his yoke is easy, and his burden is light:" and his commandments are not grievous. Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

8. From the hard and difficult passes that faith will open. When the way seems impassable, it sees the breaker going up before it: and therefore, though heaven, earth, and hell, stood in the way, it will clear the road of all difficulties. Pihahiroth and Baalzephon, impassable mountains on every hand, the Red sea before, and an enraged powerful enemy behind; can there be any door of help? Yes, says faith, only "stand still and see the salvation of God;" and thereupon the waters divide, and a lane is made through the depths of the sea for Israel. If we have faith as a grain of mustard-seed, we may say to this, and that, and the other mountain, "Be thou removed," and it shall be done.

9. The courage of faith appears from the great exploits that it has performed: for which I refer you to Heb. xi. *per totum*, particularly ver. 33—35. And does not this say, that it is a bold and courageous grace?

10. From the trophies of victory and triumph that it wears. It takes up the trophies of Christ's victory over sin, Satan, hell, and death; and cries, "I will be joyful in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banner." O, will faith say, there lies the head of the old serpent bruised by the seed of the woman: there lies the curse of the law, that "hand-writing that was against us," torn by the nails of his cross; "He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us:" there stands the world, and it is good and bad things, as a mass of mere vanity, overcome by Christ; and therefore I will tread upon them as "dung and loss, that I may win Christ," who is "all in all:" there lies death and the grave, slain by the death of Jesus: and therefore I will play on the den of this lion and cockatrice, for it cannot hurt me. Thus it appears that faith is a courageous grace, which "fears no evil."

III. The *third* thing in the general method was, to "speak a little of that Christian fortitude and boldness which makes a believer to fear no evil." All that I shall say upon this subject shall be, to offer the few following views for clearing it:

1. The seat and subject of this Christian fortitude is the heart of a believer, renewed by sovereign grace; and therefore it can never be found in the heart of a natural man. Indeed we find something that goes under that name, but is falsely so called, amongst natural men; a natural boldness and hardiness of spirit to encounter dangers, yea, even death itself, in the pursuance of their designs. The soldier, at the command of his general, will go forward in battle, though he should die upon the spot; the mariner and merchant will risk his life through storms and waves, without any great concern. But, alas! while a man is destitute of the grace of God, all these flow only from pride, covetousness, revenge, or some such reigning lust that must be maintained and supported, or at best from the natural temper of the mind, or some carnal ends and motives. "That which is born of the flesh, is" still "flesh." The fortitude or boldness that I now speak of, is only to be found in a heart or soul changed and renewed by the power of divine grace, the faith of God's operation (as I said) being the very spring and root of it. And hence it is, that we shall find this true Christian fortitude sometimes manifesting itself in those who, as to their natural temper, are the most timorous and faint-hearted; for it makes "the feeble as David, and as the angel of God before him." God "says to them that are of a fearful spirit, Be strong, fear not;" and then the man that quaked at the shaking of a leaf, becomes bold as a lion.

2. Let us view the object of this Christian fortitude, or that about which it is exerted, namely, truth and error, sin and duty. As to the concerns of a present life, worldly interests and claims, or yet matters of indifference, which a man may do or forbear, without sin on either side, the spirit of Christianity is the most yielding thing in the world. Our holy religion teaches us, as to the affairs of this life, rather than enter into litigious pleas, to quit our worldly claims; which I take to be the meaning of Christ, when he says, Matth. v. 40: "If any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." And as to matters of indifference, we are to "become all things to all men, that we may gain some. If meat make my brother to offend," says Paul, "I will eat no flesh while the world standeth." So that, I say, this Christian fortitude is not expressed about these things, but about truth or error, sin or duty. Here it is that the Christian is to make his stand; he is to be "valiant for the truth, to contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints, to buy the truth," at any rate, and to sell it at no rate; no, not the least hair or hoof of truth is to be parted with, though heaven and earth should mingle for his adhering to it, in opposition to those errors that have a tendency to obscure or destroy it. And the same thing takes place as to the matters of sin or duty, in which we are to "resist even unto blood, striving against sin," in regard the greatest of sufferings are to be chosen rather than the least of sins. The reason of which is obvious, because by the one we are only exposed to the displeasure of men, but by sin we expose ourselves to the displeasure of God, and dishonour him.

3. View this Christian courage and fortitude as to the nature of it. It takes in, I think, these things following:—

1*st*, A clear and distinct knowledge and uptaking of the truth as it is in Jesus, accompanied with a firm persuasion and assent of the soul to it, and experience of the power of it upon one's own soul. Without this, a man, instead of being valiant for the truth, will, like the weather-cock, be turned aside with every wind of error or temptation.

2*dly*, It has in it a making the truth of God in his word the proper boundary both of his faith and practice. He will not embrace "for doctrines the commandments of men;" no, but he will bring matters "to the law and testimony," to be tried at that bar; for, "if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them:" and whatever will not abide the trial there, he throws it away as the spawn of hell, with whatever human authority it may be supported. God only is Lord of the conscience, and that he will subject to no authority but God only.

3dly, It has in it a tenacious adherence to truth and duty revealed or enjoined in the word of God, and a refusing to quit it upon any consideration whatever, or whatever be the event. This is called a "keeping the word of God's patience," Rev. iii. 10; and a "holding of the testimony," Rev. vi. 9: "I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held:" a "holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering," Heb. x. 23. This I take to be imported in that advice that Barnabas gave unto the disciples at Antioch, "that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord," Acts xi. 23.

4thly, This Christian fortitude has in it a holy contempt of all that the man can suffer in a present world, in adhering to truth and duty. The man is easy about all the world, and its frowns or flatteries, if he can have God's testimony, and the testimony of a good conscience. "If God be for us," says the man, "who can be against us?" Let devils and men rage and roar, their wrath is bounded, it shall "praise the Lord, and the remainder of their wrath will he restrain." He "endures, as seeing him that is invisible." He has his eye fixed upon another world than this; and therefore he is ready to say, "The sufferings of this present life are not worthy to be compared with the exceeding glory that is to be revealed: Our light afflictions, which are but for a moment, work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal."

5thly, It has in it also a cheerfulness, alacrity, and equality of spirit, under all the turns of a man's lot in the world in following the Lord, and adhering to his cause and interest: Phil. iv. 11, 12: "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Every where and in all things I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need."

4. This Christian fortitude or courage has the following properties:—

1st, It is distinct as to the ground it goes upon; and so it is quite different from a blind zeal, which does more harm than good to religion. "I bear you witness," says Paul of his countrymen the Jews, "that ye have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

2dly, It is a holy boldness; for it stands in opposition to sin or error. The wicked world are bold to sin; but the Christian is bold to withstand it, and bold to lift up a banner for truth, when others are so bold as to pull it down.

3dly, It is an humble and self-denied boldness. The man is not bold or confident in himself, or in created grace, as Peter, when he said, "Though all men should forsake thee, yet will not I:" no, but he is "strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." And when he has helped to make a stand for the Lord, or for his cause, he will not be ready to sacrifice to his own net, like Jehu, "Come and see my zeal for the Lord of hosts:" no, but, with Paul, he will be ready to say, "Not I, but the grace of God in me: Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory." And therefore,

4thly, It is a very meek boldness. Moses was the meekest man upon earth, and yet his meekness was consistent with such boldness of spirit, as to go at God's command to Pharaoh, and require him to let Israel go, under very awful certifications: and when Pharaoh was brought so far down from his former altitudes, as to allow them to go, only to leave some little thing behind; he boldly tells him, "not a hoof was to be left behind," Exod. x. 26. And yet in all this Moses retained his meekness of spirit; for "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God."

5. The proper season for exerting this Christian courage and boldness, is, when duty is attended with danger, or when the profession of our faith is fair to expose us to the rage and persecution of men. A coward will appear courageous when there is no enemy to withstand him; but true courage discovers itself in standing the shock and attack of the enemy: so true Christian courage discovers itself in a time of danger, when "truth is falling in the street," to take it up then; or when the following of the Lord in the way of duty exposes a man to hazard and danger, for a man to set his face to the storm like a flint; that is, I say, the proper time for Christian courage to exert itself. This you see in the case of the three children, when threatened with a burning fiery furnace, if they would not worship the golden image, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter, O king: we will not worship the image thou hast set up: the God whom we serve is able to deliver us." And we see the same in Daniel, when a proclamation was issued out, forbidding any petition to be asked either of God or man, but only of the king, for thirty days, he goes into his house, and casts open his windows, so as all might take knowledge of him, and praises and gives thanks to his God three times a day, though he knew the upshot of it would be his being cast into the lions' den. The proper season for this Christian courage is a time of hazard attending duty. Alas! it is to be feared, that, among the many crowds that seem to follow Christ, and profess his name, in a day of prosperity, he would have but a thin backing of them, if Providence were calling them to fol-

low him to a Calvary or a gibbet. The seed that fell upon the stony ground had a goodly appearance for awhile; but, wanting root and deepness of earth it withered, when the scorching sun of persecution and trouble arose upon it.

6. The fruits and effects of this Christian courage and boldness in cleaving to the Lord and his way in a time of danger, and in holding his testimony, are very sweet and glorious. For,

1*st*, It is a seal added to the truth of God in the view of the world, and lets the blind world know that there is more value in the truth of God, and a matter of greater importance, than they imagine; and, by this means, truth is brought forth unto victory, notwithstanding of all the attempts of hell to obscure or bury it.

2*dly*, Christian courage and boldness in owning the truth, especially in the face of danger, strikes a damp upon the very hearts of persecutors and oppressors of it, and puts them to a stand; as we see in the instance of the apostles, Acts iv. 13. When the Jewish sanhedrim perceived the boldness of Peter and John, and took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus, they were brought to their wits' end, and say one to another, "What shall we do with these men?".

3*dly*, It serves to hearten the spirits of those who love the truth, and affords matter of praise when they see these that are in the high places appearing valiant for the truth; as we see in the same Acts iv. 23, 24. When Peter and John are let go, and when they come to their own company, making a report of all that had happened, they lift up their voice with one accord, and praise the Lord.

4*thly*, A bold appearance for the truth and cause of Christ is a sweet evidence to a man of his own salvation, and that he shall be owned of the Lord another day; for, says Christ, "He that confesseth me before men, him will I confess before my Father, and before his angels." To the same purpose is that of the apostle, Rom. x. 10: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, but with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Thus I have given you a sixfold view of that Christian fortitude and courage which is the fruit of faith.

IV. The *fourth* thing in the method was, to *inquire into the influence that faith has upon this boldness.* To which I answer in the particulars following:—

1. Faith serves to inspire the soul with Christian fortitude and boldness, by presenting God to the soul's view in his glorious majesty; at the sight of whom, the fear of man, and all

the dangers of time, entirely vanish and disappear. Hence says the apostle of Moses, Heb. xi. 27: "By faith he forsook Egypt, not fearing the wrath of the king." Why, what was it that cured him of the fear of Pharaoh's wrath? We are told in the close of the verse, that "he endured, as seeing Him who is invisible." O sirs, when the eye is opened to see the infinite majesty, greatness, excellency, and power of the great JEHOVAH, it would choose rather to venture upon the fury of all the devils in hell, and men upon earth, than venture to displease him, by parting with the least truth he has revealed, or by breaking one of the least of his commandments. It renders the soul unshaken under all trials; hence is that of David, "I have set the Lord always before me: because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved."

2. Faith inspires the soul with Christian boldness and fortitude, by enabling the soul to make a right estimate of the truth, which is the great matter of strife and contention in the world. The devil deserted, or "abode not in the truth" of God: and the way he ruined mankind at first, was by mincing away the truth of God's threatening, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die:" Hath God said so and so? And such is his enmity at the truth of God, that his main efforts are to bring it into discredit, and to bring those who profess Christ either to disbelieve it, or deny it, or desert it. Now, faith gives the soul a just view and uptaking of the value of every truth of God, yea, of those that would appear less fundamental, that it will not quit with the least hoof, though heaven and earth should mingle. O, says faith, I see that God has such a value and esteem for his truth, that he will rather throw heaven and earth back to their original nothing, than let one jot of it fall to the ground; how then shall I give it up? In a word, truth, particularly revealed truth, is just the food on which faith lives; and faith is nothing else but a "setting to the seal that God is true." Take away the truth, and faith is not; and therefore it is that faith and truth do sometimes exchange names, Jude 3: "Contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints;" the meaning is, contend earnestly for the truth delivered to the saints. Faith and truth are closely related; the one cannot subsist without the other; and hence it is, that faith inspires the soul with courage in owning it, and cleaving to it, and fears no evil in so doing.

3. Faith inspires the soul with courage, by curing it of the *fear of man*, which *causes a snare*. What was it but the fear of man that made Abraham, and Isaac also, to tell a lie? What but the fear of man made David to feign himself mad,

and Peter to deny his Master? Now, faith, when in lively exercise, sets man in his proper light, and discovers him to be what he really is. For,

1*st*, True faith tells the soul, that man is an inconsiderable creature before God: Is. xl. 15—17: "Behold the nations are before him but as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance: behold, he taketh up the isles as a very little thing.—All nations before him are as nothing, and they are counted to him less than nothing, and vanity." Faith sees the great armies of enemies to be no more than a swarm of impotent flies before God; hence is that challenge to Israel trembling at the fury of the enemy, Is. li. 12, 13: "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be made as grass? And forgettest the Lord thy maker, that hath stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? and hast feared continually every day, because of the fury of the oppressor, as if he were ready to destroy? and where is the fury of the oppressor?" O sirs, if the majesty of such a challenge were but laid home upon our spirits, we would make little account of poor man, and his displeasure, in cleaving to the Lord, and his truths and way.

2*dly*, Faith tells the soul, that as a man is an inconsiderable creature, so he is a mortal dying creature; and *that very day* he dies, all *his thoughts* and designs *perish*: Is. xl. 6—8: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: but the word of our God shall stand for ever." Now, faith sees that to be true, and so it cures the soul of the fear of man.

3*dly*, Faith tells the soul, that any little power that man hath is bounded by an over-ruling hand; and that he can go no farther, in punishing his resentments, than God allows him: Psal. lxxvi. 10: The wrath of man shall praise thee; and the remainder of his wrath shalt thou restrain." Hence is that of Christ to Pilate, who was making his boast, that he had power to take away his life, or to save it; "Thou hast no power against me, but what is given thee from above." As he sets bounds to the raging sea, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, and no farther;" so he sets bounds to the rage of man.

4*thly*, Faith views man as a guilty criminal before God, the righteous Judge of all the earth; and the conscience of guilt strikes them with fear and terror: especially when there is valiant contending for the truth, which they are endeavouring

to stifle and suppress. Hence it was that Felix, when sitting upon the judgment-seat, fell a trembling before Paul at the bar, I mean, Paul, when he spake of *righteousness, temperance*, and a *judgment to come*. They may well touch the body, the estate, the name, and such external things; but they cannot harm the soul, which is the more noble part of the man. Hence is that needful caution of Christ to his followers, "Be not afraid of them that kill the body: and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye shall fear: Fear him, who, after he hath killed, hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him," Luke xii. 4, 5. They cannot thunder with a voice like God; they cannot blot your names out of the book of life, or shut the gates of heaven, or open and shut up your souls in the prison of hell. Faith sees that the man's enemies, in owning the cause of truth, are God's enemies, and all the enemies of God shall perish. Thus you see what a view faith gives of all the children of men, and their wrath; and this is it that inspires the soul with a holy boldness, and undaunted courage, in the face of the greatest dangers.

4. Faith inspires with Christian courage in time of danger and trouble from the world, by viewing the inside of troubles for Christ, as well as the outside of them. When we walk by sense, and not by faith, we will soon be dispirited in a day of trouble and danger, and be ready to cry, "There is a lion in the way, there is a lion in the streets," the way is impassable. Banishments, prisons, and death, have something in them that are horrible to nature and sense. But now faith looks to the inside of troubles, and considers what God has made, and can still make, these to his people; it considers how joyful the Lord's people have been in tribulation; what honey they have found in the carcass of a lion; what songs he has given them in the night, in stocks and dungeons, and what glorying in tribulation; how he has brought into their bosom a hundred-fold of a reward even in this life; how many of the Lord's people have found themselves quite mistaken respecting a suffering lot, when once they have fairly ventured upon it in following the Lord: that which at a distance looked like a serpent, has been found to be a rod in the hand; a prison has been turned into a palace to them, so that they have been more loath to come out of prison, than they were to enter into it. O sirs, "the consolations of God are not small;" they infinitely counterbalance all the gall that is in the cup of suffering for Christ.

5. Faith inspires the soul with courage, by laying the "glory that is to be revealed" in balance against all the "sufferings of this present life," and then it cries, They "are not worthy

to be compared" together. It is said of the saints, in Heb. x. 34, they "took joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and a more enduring substance." 2 Cor. iv. 16, 17. Faith views the certainty of the reward of glory; "for it is the evidence of things not seen;" and thereupon it cries, "Verily there is a reward for the righteous." Faith views the greatness of the reward, saying, "Our light afflictions work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Faith views heaven and glory to be near at hand, that there is nothing but a partition-wall of clay, nothing but the breath of the nostrils between the soul and the immediate enjoyment of God; and thereupon it cries, with Paul, "I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better."

6. Faith inspires the soul with Christian courage, by clearing the heart and soul of the guilt and filth of sin. A man can never be a true sufferer for Christ, while conscience is roaring, and telling him that he has an angry God to meet with on the back of death; hence we find that the spirit of a *sound mind*, and a spirit of *slavish fear*, are opposite, 2 Tim. i. 7. By a "spirit of a sound mind;" some understand a mind purified from the guilt of sin. Now, faith is a grace that has a mighty influence this way, Acts xv. 9: "Purifying their hearts by faith." It brings the soul to the Jordan of a Redeemer's blood, and washes it from sin, and from uncleanness: it wraps up the soul in the white robe and mantle of the everlasting righteousness of Christ, and then it can, with a holy boldness, cry, And "who is he that will contend with me? he is near that justifieth." Hence is that saying, Rom. v. 1—3: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

7. Faith inspires the soul with courage and constancy in an evil day, by keeping the eye fixed upon Jesus, according to that advice of the apostle, Heb. xii. 2: "Let us run our race with patience, looking unto Jesus." And here I will tell you of a few things in Jesus that serve to inspire the soul with holy courage and magnanimity.

1*st*, Faith sees Christ upon its head, as the great Captain of salvation, giving out the word of command, "Fight the good fight of faith, stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men, be strong. And having him as a leader and commander, the man *waxes valiant in fight*, knowing that nothing but weakness is in the way.

2*dly*, Faith views the example of Christ, how he encountered the wrath of God, the curse of the law, the fury of devils, and rage of men, with undaunted resolution, in order to our redemption: and the valour of the General inspires

the soldier with courage to follow him through all imaginable danger.

3*dly*, Faith sees all fulness of grace treasured up in Christ, the head of the mystical body, for the supply of every particular member according to need; and then the man cries out with courage, as Paul did, "I can do all things through Christ strengthening me." He becomes "strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus."

4*thly*, Faith sees a reconciled God in Christ smiling on the soul, and standing on its side; and this gives courage. "The Lord of hosts is with us, and the God of Jacob is our refuge." O sirs, a God in Christ is not a God against us, but "Immanuel, God with us;" and this makes the soul to cry, *I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.*

5*thly*, Faith, keeping its eye on Christ, sees victory secured in the end of the day; yea, it sees the victory already obtained in him, it sees the spoils of the enemy in his hand, and him triumphing over, and treading upon his enemies as his foot-stool: and this, O this, fills the soul with holy courage, saying, "We are more than conquerors, through him that loved us: Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus you see whence it is that faith inspires the soul with courage and boldness. Many other things to this purpose might be insisted upon, but I pass them, and go on to,

V. The *fifth* thing, which was the *Application.*

Use *first* may be of *Information*, only in two words.

1. See hence the excellency of the grace of faith. Why, it is a bold, a daring, and courageous grace; hence commonly opposed to fear: "Why art thou fearful, O thou of little faith?" Faith pulls up the heart and spirit in a time of danger, and cries, Courage, for the day is mine own; I see the Captain of salvation, who was made perfect through suffering, with the spoils of hell and death in his hand.

2. See hence the evil and danger of the sin of unbelief. Why, it intimidates the soul, and gives birth and being to a dastardly and cowardly spirit, and either makes a man to stagger, or else turn back and cry, The way is impassable. Hence the *fearful* and *unbelieving* are linked together, Rev. xxi. 8. O sirs, except we believe, we shall never be established in an evil day. Moses, you heard, "endured, as seeing Him who is invisible."

Use *second* shall be of *Trial.* Whether have you a faith that will carry you through, and inspire you with courage in an evil day? I will give the few following marks by which you may try it:—

1. It is a faith that springs out of the ruin of self. Whenever faith springs up, self goes down; self-wisdom, self-righteousness, self-sufficiency. You have seen your own wisdom to be but folly: "I am more brutish than any man," &c. Self-righteousness, you have seen it to be nothing but *filthy rags*, saying, with the apostle, "Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ." Self-sufficiency and strength, you have seen it to be emptiness, saying, "In me dwelleth no good thing."

2. It is a Christ exalting faith, it sets him on high: "To you that believe, he is precious." "Whom have I in heaven but thee."

3. It is a feeding and soul-nourishing faith; it eats the flesh and drinks the blood of the Son of man. Christ in the word of grace is like its necessary food; hence it is that the Christian is a growing creature, he "increases with the increase of God;" like a "new-born babe," he drinks in the "sincere milk of the word," and so "grows thereby."

4. It is a faith that works by love. It views the glory of Christ, and the heart follows the eye, and causes it to burn with love to him, and desire after him. And this love to Christ makes the man to love every thing that pertains to him. He loves his word, and esteems it above gold; yea, much fine gold." He loves his ordinances, where he gets fellowship with him: "I love the habitation of thy house, where thine honour dwelleth." "How amiable are thy tabernacles, Lord God of hosts!" He loves his ways: "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace." He loves his people, and all that have the Spirit of Jesus: "By this we know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." He loves the very cross of Christ above the pleasures of the world, like Moses, who "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt."

5. It is a fertile or a fruitful faith, that is always exciting the man to the study of holiness in all manner of conversation. It is an obedient and a working faith; for "faith without works is dead." As works without faith are but "dead works," which cannot be accepted by the living God;" so faith without works is but a dead faith, which will soon wither, and come to naught, particularly in a day of trial, like the faith of the stony-ground hearers.

Use *third* is of *Exhortation*. And my only exhortation is, that you would not only believe, but study to have a faith that will inspire you with that courage which actuated David in the text, when he said, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil." And, to

excite your Christian fortitude and courage, consider, by way of motive,—

1. That the day we live in requires it. The winds and tide of error and defection are blowing and running hard; the judicatories of the church are stricken with such a spiritual frenzy and madness, that instead of acting in an agreeableness to the trust committed to them by the Lord, in opposing error and corruption, they are patronising and setting up the right hands of the wicked, and opposing and oppressing all that have any show of serious godliness, or that open a mouth against the courses of defection they are engaged in. And who knows but a storm may be at the door, which will make us all to stagger? And therefore I say it is needful.

2. Consider, that Christ was bold and courageous in our cause; and shall not we be bold and courageous in his cause? See with what courage he takes the field, Is. l. &c.

3. Christ, the Captain of our salvation, commands and requires his followers to take courage, and to be bold in him. He would have us to be strong, and of good courage, as he said to Joshua: "Stand fast in the faith, quit yourselves like men; and be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might." When their spirits are beginning to droop, he says, "Fear not them that kill the body," &c.

4. The eye of our great Captain and General is upon us, and let that inspire us with courage. If a soldier know that his captain is looking on, it will make him to venture upon death and danger. Sirs, He that is invisible, our glorious Leader and Commander, is standing by, noticing how every one of us acquit ourselves in our warfare with sin, Satan, and the world: "his eyes are as a flame of fire, searching Jerusalem as with lighted candles;" and should not this inspire us with courage? As it is a pleasure to him to see his soldiers brisk in the day of battle, so it sensibly touches and wounds him when they faint and go back, as though his cause were not worth the contending for.

5. Take courage, believer, for the cause is good. You fight for the honour of your God, for his precious truths, and for "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made his people free;" yea, for the defence of every thing that is valuable to ourselves and our posterity. The liberties and privileges of the church and kingdom of Christ in this land have been handed down to us at the expense of the blood of Christ, and the blood of many of the martyrs: and shall we not take courage to maintain and defend what has been transmitted to us at such a dear rate?

6. The enemy is but weak, and a courageous stand will make them to give way. "Resist the devil and he will flee

from you;" resist his emissaries, that are carrying on a course of defection, and they will give back; or put them to such a stand, that they will be at their wits' end, as we see it was with the Jewish court, Acts iv. &c. You know, when Goliath was slain by David, the heart of the Philistines failed them, and they fled. Sirs, Goliath is slain by Christ; he, "through death, hath destroyed him that had the power of death;" and therefore a noble stand against his armies will soon dispirit them.

7. Take courage, believer, for JEHOVAH, God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is on your head, Mic. ii. at the close. And, if everlasting strength be on your side, what have you to fear? Psal. xlvi. &c.

8. The victory is sure. The spoils are already in the hand of our glorious General, and he has promised to give the victory to all that are "faithful unto death" in cleaving to him and his way; and therefore take courage. You see what a train of promises are made to those who overcome, Rev. ii. and iii.

I conclude with a few advices, in order to your being fortified with Christian courage against the shadows of death that may cast up in your way through the wilderness.

1. Take care that your covenant with hell, and your agreement with death, be broken; and that you be really settled by faith upon the foundation that God has laid in Zion. O see that you be not building upon any foundation of sand with respect to to your eternal concerns, but that you be really built upon the rock Jesus Christ; for another foundation can no man lay, than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." You may read to this purpose, Matth. vii. 24—27; where you see, that there are but two foundations that all men are building their hope of salvation upon, either upon the *rock*, or upon the *sand*. Christ himself is the rock; and all other things else, whether general mercy, self-righteousness, common graces or attainments, are but foundations of sand. And you see, also, that when storms of trouble blow, the house built upon the rock stands the shock; but the house built upon the sand falls, and "great is the fall of it." And therefore my advice to you, in order to your standing when storms blow that have the shadows of death in them, is, For the Lord's sake, take care that the foundation be well laid upon Christ, so that you be joined to him by the bond of faith of God's operation; receive him, and rest upon him, as "made of God unto you" (sinners) "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

2. Study not only to have faith in the habit, but to have faith in the continual exercise; for faith, like the spring of a

watch, sets all the other wheels, I mean the other graces of the Spirit, a-going; such as, love, repentance, fear, hope, patience, and joy in the Lord: and while these are kept in exercise, there is no fear, though the shadows of death should stretch themselves over us. Hence the apostle exhorts Christians "above all to take the shield of faith," Eph. vi. 16, because all depends upon the grace of faith, which itself depends upon Christ: "I can do all things," says Paul, "through Christ strengthening me." Faith speaks like a little omnipotent; faith is a victorious grace, that overcomes the world, and all difficulties in its way. By faith it was that those worthies, mentioned Heb. xi. did wonders; by faith they "quenched the violence of fire, turned to flight the armies of the aliens, and raised the dead out of the grave;" by faith they "endured cruel mockings and scourgings," &c. When created comforts vanish, riches, relations, pleasures; well, in that case, faith will look to the Lord, and have respect to the holy One of Israel; when sense can find nothing to stay upon, all props are withdrawn, faith will stay itself upon the Lord; when the promise seems to fail, faith will wait, and not make haste; when the strength of created grace begins to fail, faith will stay and sit down upon everlasting strength, Is. xxvi. 3. So, then, study to have faith in exercise.

3. Study to get your hearts steeled with Christian fortitude and courage, which is the natural fruit of that faith which "worketh by love." We have a noble pattern of this, in the glorious Captain of salvation, whose followers we are called to be, particularly in a suffering lot: he "set his face like a flint," and challenges all his enemies to encounter him, Is. l.: "He is near that helpeth, who will contend with me?" &c. Paul followed his Master's example, when he was told that *bonds and afflictions* did *abide* him, Acts xx. 24, he answers, "None of these things move me: I am ready not to be bound only, but to die," &c. And when he was to appear before that cruel monster Nero, and no man to own him, or stand by him, yet he stands his ground, resolving rather to die on the spot than dishonourably to recede from his principles and profession. What holy courage breathes here in the words of David, *Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil*, &c.

4. Another advice I give you is this, Study to get rid of the idol of self; self-righteousness, self-wisdom, self-sufficiency. "If any man will be my disciple, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The prevalency of self was the forerunner of Peter's fall; "Though all men should deny thee, yet will not I." He was too confident of his created grace and strength; and the Lord, in order to hum-

ble him, and divest him from this kind of confidence, will let him fall into a mire of sin, and deny him in the hour of temptation, at the voice of a silly maid. There are two things in which the strength of the Christian lies. (1.) Self-diffidence. (2.) Confidence in the Lord. If these two be maintained, they will make the believer stand, when the darkest shadows of death are round about him. "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of the Lord." This is just the way and work of faith; it travels between self-emptiness and all fulness, between self-guiltiness and everlasting righteousness, between self-weakness and everlasting strength: hence says David, "I will go in the strength of the Lord, making mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only."

5. Study to get your heart weaned from, and mortified to, the world, and all its fading interests and enjoyments. The world is a dead weight upon the soul, especially in a day of trial, where the love of it has the ascendant and prevalency in the heart; hence, we are told, that Demas forsook Paul, and the profession of Christianity, by having loved this present world: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." And if the love of the Father be not in us, it is impossible we can stand in a shaking day. There are these things in the world that we should study to be mortified to, in order to our standing in a time of trial:—

1*st*, Our worldly estates and riches. "The love of money is the root of all evil, which, while some have coveted, they have erred from the faith," &c. O what a scandal is it to Christianity, to see men professing Christ and Christianity, so wedded to the world, and the perishing riches of it! In order to our getting it under our feet, let us view it in the light in which God has set it to us in his word; his verdict of things is the truest; and if we believe him, all that is in it is mere "vanity, vanity of vanities," &c. Let us contemplate things above, and look at things not seen, &c. What will it appear when we are a little beyond death?

2*dly*, Let us study to be mortified to our worldly credit, our name, and reputation in the world. It commonly goes very near us, and it was among the sharpest of trials that the worthies met with, Heb. xi. when they endured "the trial of cruel mockings." It is no easy thing to proud nature to have our name and reputation torn by reproach, and "cast out as evil:" yet, I say, if we would stand in a day of trial, we must lay our worldly name and credit at the feet of Christ. He was content to have his "name, which is above every name," blackened with reproach for us; he was called "a blasphemer, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sin-

ners," an affecter of popularity, yea, a *devil:* but "he endured the cross, and despised the shame of it." Sirs, let us remember that we are neither to stand or fall according to the world's verdict of us: "It is a small thing for me to be judged of men: he that judgeth me is the Lord." Let us remember, that there is a real glory in bearing reproach for Christ and his cause: Moses "esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt."

3*dly*, Let us study to be mortified to worldly ease, quiet, and liberty. Paul lays his account with "bonds for the name of Christ." Sirs, what matters it being, like Paul and Silas, shut up in a dungeon for Christ, and under chains, if his presence be with us, as it was with them? &c. A prison has been tenanted by the most eminent of the saints now in glory, Jer. xxxii.; Matth. iv. 12; Acts v. 18. But God loosed his prisoners, and set them free at length. Commonly, when men are cruel, the Lord is kind: he "looks down from heaven, to hear the sighing and groanings of his prisoners," &c. A prison or confinement by men is not hell; men have their prisons, and God has his. We read of those who sinned in the days of Noah, that are now in the prison of hell, 1 Pet. iii. 19; that is a terrible prison indeed, no relief there: little hazard of men's prisons, if that be all the hell we are to endure.

4*thly*, Let us study to get our affections mortified even to the inordinate love of life. This, indeed, is a hard lecture; yet it is a lecture that we must learn, if we be the followers of Christ, when a day of trial comes. Sirs, if ever you took on with Christ the Captain of salvation, you have laid your lives at his feet, and all the comforts of life to be disposed of by him. Die we must one time or other, and we can never part with it more honourably than in the cause of Christ. Christ parted with his valuable life for us, and shall we spare our poor miserable life for him? Again, think what a life of glory you enter into, when you lay down your life for his cause, &c.

6. In order to our being prepared for encountering the shadows of death, secure these three good things, and there is no fear; a good God, a good cause, and a good conscience:—

1*st*, Secure the presence of a reconciled God in Christ. It was the faith of this, that made David so bold here in the text: *Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me.*" His promise is sure "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the flames, they shall not kindle upon thee. Let faith fasten

on his word, and say, "This God is my God for ever and ever, and he will be my guide even unto death."

2*dly*, Secure a good cause. It is a miserable heartless thing for a man to suffer as an evil-doer, to suffer as a busy body in other men's matters; but to suffer for Christ, for the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of his house, to suffer for his members, or for cleaving to the least of his truths, is comfortable and creditable; and we are to "account it all joy when we fall into divers temptations" and trials on this account, even though but the least hoof of divine truth be concerned; for better heaven and earth were unhinged, than one jot or tittle of the truth of God be suffered to fall to the ground.

3*dly*, Secure a good conscience to bear you company; for this is like a bird in the bosom, that makes the countenance glad, even when storms blow hard from without. "This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not with fleshly wisdom, we have had our conversation in the world." And in order to your having a good conscience, get it sprinkled with the blood of the Lamb, and keep at the greatest distance from every thing that may defile it, even though it should offend the whole world in so doing.

7. Keep your eyes fixed upon Jesus as our glorious pattern, and see him within the veil, with the spoils of hell in his hand, Heb. xii. 2: "Let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, &c. View him as the renowned Captain of salvation, coming from Edom. Eye him,

1*st*. As our Redeemer that has satisfied justice for us. So did Job: "I know that my Redeemer liveth," &c. This put him in case to look death and the grave in the face.

2*dly*, Eye him as your Leader, and the Captain of salvation made perfect through sufferings. He waded through a sea of blood and wrath, and he is now on the other side, crying, "Fear not; for I was dead, and am alive."

3*dly*, Eye him as your head of influence, and wait for supplies of grace from him; for he will not be wanting to give out life and strength to his members, as he has service for them.

Lastly, Eye him as a head of government, having all power in heaven and in earth in his hand, for the benefit of his mystical body; for this will make you sing in the midst of tribulation, saying, "The Lord liveth, and blessed be my rock: and let the God of my salvation be exalted." "The Lord shall reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Selah."

SERMON XXVI.

THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION TO THE THRONE OF GLORY.*

God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.—PSAL. XLVII. 5.

THE FIRST SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

THIS psalm seems to have been composed upon the occasion of that great solemnity, of carrying up the ark from the house of Obed-edom to the city of Zion; the history of which we have, 2 Sam. vi. and 1 Chron. xiii. 6. But as Zion was a type of the church, and the ark a type of Christ; so this has plainly a respect to the ascension of Christ to heaven, and, as a consequence and fruit of it, to the spreading and enlargement of his kingdom in all parts and nations of the world.

The psalm begins with an exhortation to praise, (ver. 1:) "O clap your hands, all ye people, shout unto God with the voice of triumph." The party exhorted is, "all ye people;" not only all the tribes of Israel, but all the ends of the earth, are concerned in this common Saviour and his salvation; and therefore all are exhorted to join in this triumph, of celebrating the glory of our Redeemer. And they are exhorted to clap their hands, and shout with the voice of triumph, like men in a transport that cannot contain themselves. Clapping of the hands, and shouting upon any solemn occasion, is a token of approbation. Every soul that hears of Christ, should approve of the device of Infinite Wisdom through him: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." A token of joy and pleasure. Christ is the joy and pleasure of his Father; and he is also the joy of all the redeemed, they are just "gladdened with his countenance," as the expression is, Psal. xxi. 6. A token of admiration and wonder. "God manifested in the flesh," is the wonder of angels, and the admi-

* The substance of two sermons, preached at the celebration of the Lord's supper at Abernethy, April 28, 1734.

ration of all the saints, both in the church militant and triumphant.

Now follow some considerations to induce and engage all people to praise and gratitude.

1. Our Redeemer is to be praised, because of the awful majesty of God that is in him: "The Lord most high is terrible." But, say you, is this matter of praise? *Answ.* It is great matter of praise that our Redeemer is none other than the most high God, who strikes terror on the powers of hell; he comes to bruise the head of the serpent, and through death to destroy him that had the power of death; he is terrible to all the wicked enemies of his church and people; for "he cutteth off the spirits of princes, and is terrible to the kings of the earth." Is it not matter of praise to the church, to have this God for our God, for our everlasting friend?

2. He is a sovereign Lord, and his dominion is universal; "he is a great King over all the earth." His kingdom is so extensive, that it reaches from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth, according to the promise made to him by his Father, "I will give him the Heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for a possession."

3. He is to be praised for the honour and victory that he gives to all his ransomed: "He will (ver. 3,) subdue the people under us, and the nations under our feet;" that is, through him we shall be conquerors, yea, "more than conquerors;" in him we shall "rule the nations with a rod of iron," according to what we have, Psal. cxlix.

4. He is to be praised for the pleasant portion and goodly heritage that he bestows upon all his true Israel; ver. 4: "He shall choose our inheritance for us, the excellency of Jacob whom he loved;" that is, he will order every thing in our lot in the world, to his glory and our good; and, which is best of all, he himself will be our portion for ever, when flesh and heart fail; and this is "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away."

5. He is to be praised upon the account of his triumphant ascension to heaven in our nature, the views of which just fill the church here with a transport of wonder and praise: ver. 5—7: *God is gone up with a shout*, &c.

It is the first part of verse 5, that I design to insist upon, *God is gone up with a shout.* Where notice,

1. The glorious and awful name and character of our Redeemer; he is *God;* that is, God, not absolutely or essentially considered, for in this respect he cannot properly be said to go up, or come down: but it is God in our nature, in the person of the Son, God manifested in the flesh; that God

who is the object of all praise and adoration, verse 6; that God who is "King over all the earth," verse 7; that God who "reigneth over the heathen," and who "sitteth upon the throne of his holiness," verse 8; "the God of Abraham, to whom all the shields of the earth do belong;" it is that same God that is *gone up with a shout.* Who dares to wear that great name, but only he who is in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God? Among other winds that are blowing at this day in the valley of vision, the wind of blasphemy against a glorious Trinity, and particularly blasphemy against our glorious Emmanuel, blows very hard. I fear there are more than we are aware of in this land, that are carried off with the wind of that detestable Arian heresy; and therefore it concerns all that love the Lord Jesus, to think and speak honourably of him, and to be established in the faith of his supreme and self-existent Deity; you see here how honourably the church speaks of him, with a view to his ascending in our nature, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord* (or JEHOVAH) *with the sound of a trumpet.*

2. Notice his ascension and exaltation; *he is gone up.* This plainly alludes to the carrying up of the ark to the hill of Zion, which was done with great solemnity; the ark being the instituted token of God's special presence among them; its being carried from the house of Obed-edom, where it had remained in obscurity, to the high hill of Zion, typified the ascension of Christ to mount Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem above, from this lower world, where his divine glory had been eclipsed for about three and thirty years.

3. In the words we have the solemnity of Christ's ascension; he is *gone up with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet.* When the ark was carried up to mount Zion, David danced before it, and the priests blew with their trumpets, and the people huzzaed and shouted for joy. Indeed, when Christ ascended into heaven, we do not read of any such shouting or sounding among the inhabitants of this lower world; but there was a great and glorious solemnity among angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect. The psalmist speaks of the solemnity of Christ's ascension among the inhabitants of the invisible world, Psal. lxviii.: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is in the midst of them as in Sinai. Thou hast ascended up on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious, also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." And it is thought by the judicious Owen, that in the 5th chapter of the Revelation, it is the solemnity of Christ's ascension to the throne of glory that is spoken of, ver. 11—14. "I beheld, and I heard the

voice of many angels round about the throne: and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," &c. Oh! sirs, we generally think little of Christ's ascension; and indeed it made little noise here below; but it made a great noise in the other world, and will make heaven to ring with shouts of praise through an endless eternity. But I do not insist farther upon the explication of the words.

OBSERVE, "That the ascension of Christ to heaven, or his ascension to the throne of glory, is great matter of joy and triumph both in the church militant and triumphant," namely, Here it is told us as matter of praise and triumph, even to us who are yet in a militant state, that *God* in our nature, *is gone up with a shout, and the Lord with the sound of a trumpet;* and therefore the exhortation follows, "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises." We are called to join in the solemnity. O *rejoice in* an exalted Christ, "ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."

Here, through grace, I would,

I. Confirm the truth of the doctrine, that God in our nature is ascended.

II. I would inquire what is supposed or implied in that expression of his ascension, *he is gone up.*

III. I would speak a little of the solemnity of his up-going, implied in his going up *with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet.*

IV. I would make it evident, that his going up is indeed a matter of joy and triumph to all that believe it, whether in the visible or invisible world, in the church militant or triumphant.

V. Make some application of the whole.

I. The *first* thing is, to *prove the truth of this doctrine.* And there are two things to be proved. 1. That Christ is gone up or ascended. 2. That this is matter of triumph and joy to the church militant and triumphant.

As to the *first* of these, that Christ is actually ascended, or that God is gone up in our nature.

1. This was typified under the Old Testament by the ark, which continued in a wandering uncertain condition, as to the place of its abode, till at length, as you heard, it was taken up to mount Zion, and fixed in that secret place of the temple, called "the holy of holies," which typified the highest heavens into which Christ is now entered in our nature. This was also typified by Joseph, who, after he had been sold by his brethren, carried into Egypt like a slave, unjustly cast

into prison, and laid under fetters of iron, was taken from prison, exalted in the court of Pharaoh, having the whole government of the kingdom devolved upon him, vested with such absolute authority, that he bound their nobles with fetters of iron at his pleasure, every one bowing the knee before him. See how this answers the antitype, Phil. ii. 6—11.

2. Christ's triumphant ascension was not only typified, but foretold by the prophet. Psal. cx. we are told, that he should sit on his Father's *right hand*, and after he had "drunk of the brook in the way, he should lift up the head," and be vested with such power and authority, as to "strike through kings in the day of his wrath, and wound the heads of his enemies over many nations." In a word, all the prophets prophesied of his resurrection and exaltation, how he was first "to suffer, and then to enter into his glory."

3. This is farther evident from the testimony of famous witnesses. Acts i. we are told, that when Christ had led the disciples out of Jerusalem to mount Olivet, while he was talking with them about the affairs of his kingdom, after he had instructed them as to their management in these matters, he was taken up into heaven, and a cloud received him out of their sight; and thereupon two of his glorious retinue, clothed in white, whom he had on purpose left behind to comfort his disciples, say to them, (ver. 11,) "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come, in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven." We have this same truth attested by the proto-martyr Stephen, Acts vii. 55, 56, while standing before the Jewish council, he, being filled with the Holy Ghost, his face shining like the face of an angel, cries out, "Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God;" and Paul tells us, that "he was seen of him also, as of one born out of due season."

4. This is farther confirmed from many pleasant texts of scripture, Heb. i. 3;—iv. 14;—viii. 1;—xii. 2; and many other places, where we read of his being "at the right hand of the Majesty on high."

5. This appears from the glorious fruits and consequences of his actual accession to the throne of glory, which have appeared in the open view of all mankind. If he be not gone up, and actually vested with all power in heaven and in earth, whence was it that the spirit was poured down from on high in such a miraculous way and manner at Pentecost, Acts ii. like the rushing of a mighty wind, resting on each of the apostles like cloven tongues of fire? Whence came the gift

of tongues, by which the illiterate fishermen, who knew no language but their mother tongue, were enabled to speak, with the greatest volubility, all manner of languages? Surely this power from on high came down from him who had gone up with a shout, that they might be in a capacity, according to the commission they had received from him, to "go and teach all nations" the knowledge of the mysteries of salvation through him, and particularly that he who "was dead was now alive, and liveth for evermore:" and that he "had the keys of hell and of death."

Whence came the gift of miracles, the opening the eyes of the blind, the unstopping the ears of the deaf, their healing the sick, and raising the dead, and the like excellent signs and wonders which were wrought by the hands of the apostles and disciples, of which we read in the Acts of the Apostles? These things were not done in secret, but in the open view of the whole world; and whatever miracles they wrought, they were always done in the name of a risen and exalted Jesus.

How came it about, that by the simple preaching of the doctrine of Christ's resurrection and exaltation, the Mosaic economy, which had the authority of the divine institution, was unhinged; the idolatries of the Heathen, in which they had been habituated for many ages and generations, were made to fall down and give way to the kingdom and government of Christ, and the purity and simplicity of gospel worship? How came it about, that, in the compass of a very few years, almost all nations were brought to bow to the royal sceptre of this exalted King: for Paul tells us, that even in his day, the *sound* of the apostles "went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world?" How came it about, that the followers of Christ, and his doctrine and kingdom, were not entirely buried in oblivion, when the strength of the Roman empire, which had subdued all nations under it, was employed to stifle and suppress it, in ten several bloody persecutions? Whence was it, that the disciples of a crucified Christ, with such invincible courage, were enabled to bear the greatest barbarity that their enemies could exercise upon them? How came their numbers rather to increase than diminish when so many millions of them were slaughtered for their adherence to the faith of Christ's resurrection from the dead? How came it about, that the Roman emperors, and that whole powerful empire, after their utmost efforts to raze the name of Christ and Christianity from the earth, were at length obliged to bow at the name of Jesus, and to confess, that he was the Lord of all, to the glory of his eternal Father? All these things, I say, are clear and uncontested evidences of the ascension of Christ, and his ac-

cession to the throne of glory above. And I am ready to think, that it was with a view to these, and the like events, that were to follow upon his resurrection and exaltation, that he said to his disciples, while he was yet on this side of death, and of the sea of his sufferings, John xiv. 12: "He that believeth on me, the works that I do, shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he do: because I go unto my Father:" and indeed it was fit that he should do greater works after he came to the throne, than when he was yet on the dunghill.

I should now go on to prove, that Christ's ascension to the throne of glory, is matter of triumph and shouting to all the redeemed, both in the church militant and triumphant; but this will be cleared in the sequel of the discourse; and therefore I wave it now, and proceed to,

II. The *second* thing in the method, which was, to *show what is imported in this expression of his going up: God is gone up with a shout.* I answer in these particulars:—

1. It implies his voluntary humiliation, according to that of Christ, John iii. 13, where he says to Nicodemus, in order to afford him a view of his divine nature, and of his humiliation and exaltation at once, "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." Our great and glorious Redeemer, though he had glory with his Father before the world was; though he was by him as one brought up with him; was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; yet he rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men: such was his kindness to the fallen tribe and family of Adam, that he would needs pay us a visit in our low state. More particularly,

2. *God is gone up;* it supposes his incarnation, or assumption of the nature of man; for, as I said in the explication of the words, God essentially considered cannot be said to go up or to come down, to ascend or to descend, because he fills heaven and earth, and the heaven of heavens cannot contain him; therefore his going up must have a respect to him as incarnate. And here is a mystery that you and I had need to be learning every day. This is a strange thing that God hath wrought in the earth, the fulness of the Godhead dwelling bodily in the man Christ Jesus. Without controversy, it is a great mystery, that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us. In the fulness of time, God sent forth his Son made of a woman." Oh! let every one of us for himself take hold of this kinsman, as Ruth did of Boaz, and claim relation to him, saying, "Cast thy skirt over me, for thou art my near kinsman."

3. *Christ going up;* it supposes, that he had ended or finished the work or service for which he came down into this lower world; that he had fulfilled the law, satisfied justice, and brought in everlasting righteousness. To this purpose is that of Christ, John xvi. speaking of the work of the Spirit, when he should be poured out after his ascension, he shall convince the world "of righteousness, because I go to the Father." Sirs, if Christ had not brought in everlasting righteousness, if he had not magnified the law and made it honourable, he could never have gone up to the Father; but his going up with a shout of triumph, is a declaration to the world, that "the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake."

4. It supposes his resurrection from the dead, by which he was justified as the public head and surety of an elect world, and "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness." If the bonds of death had detained him, he could never have *gone up with a shout.* Oh! sirs, Christ is risen indeed, and by his resurrection we are begotten again unto the lively hope of "an inheritance, incorruptible, undefiled, and which fadeth not away."

5. *God is gone up with a shout,* implies that the gates of glory, which had been shut, were again opened by the death and satisfaction of Christ. Immediately upon the breach of the first covenant, heaven's gates were barred against Adam and all his posterity, and would have continued so to all eternity; but, upon the satisfaction of Christ, promised and actually made, and fulfilled in the fulness of time, the gates of glory were cast open for the reception of Christ, himself, as the surety, and of all that do by faith fly in under the covert of his righteousness; hence we are said to "have boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus," Heb. x. 19; and the ground of this you have, chap. ix. 24: "Christ himself entered into heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us."

6. It implies, that God the Father is perfectly well pleased with the person and undertaking of our glorious Redeemer; for, if he had not been well pleased, how could he give him such a solemn reception after his work was done? God the Father declares his satisfaction with him, while he was yet about his work, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased:" and when his work was ended and finished, he testified his satisfaction with it, by giving him a triumph upon the back of it; he ushers him into the throne of glory with the joyful shouts and triumphs of the heavenly hosts of saints and angels.

7. It implies, that when Christ ascended, after his finishing

our redemption, he was received into heaven with the universal applause and admiration of the triumphant company. Oh! sirs, when the Son of God returned to heaven, wearing the nature of man, carrying the scars of the wounds he got upon the field of battle, when he bruised the head of the serpent, how did every one of the heavenly company study to outdo another in warbling forth his praises! While the triumphant Conqueror resumed his throne, how did the arches of heaven echo and resound, crying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom and strength, and dominion and honour, and glory, and blessing! —Salvation to our God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever!" But this leads me to,

III. The *third* thing in the method, which is, to *speak a little of the solemnity of Christ's ascension;* for here we are told, he went up with "a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet." And here let us consider,—

1. The place from whence he went up. He went up from this earth, where he had many a sorrowful and weary day; for he was "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with griefs." Oh! what a scene of sorrow and misery had he gone through from his birth to his grave! He was, indeed, "the hind of the morning," as he is called in the title of the 22d psalm. This world was the hunting-field, where "dogs compassed him about," and pursued him till they bit him to death upon mount Calvary. What good reason had he to hate this world, where he had met with such bad entertainment! especially if we consider,

2. Whither he is gone up. He is gone up into the third heavens, where "no unclean thing shall enter;" and "the heavens are to contain him till the time of the restitution of all things." He is gone to a paradise of pleasure, where the old serpent cannot enter; there is "no lion or ravenous beast to hurt or destroy in all that holy mountain." He is gone up from the dunghill to the throne, where he is swaying the sceptre of glory, where thrones and dominions, principalities and powers, angels and archangels, cherubims and seraphims, attend him, as his ministering spirits, waiting his orders, to do service to his mystical body yet upon earth.

3. To whom is he gone up? You have an answer to this, in his words to Mary, John xx. 17, where he gives her a commission: "Go tell my brethren, that I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." He had from all eternity lodged in his Father's bosom; he had been by him as one brought up with him; he was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him: and what an infinite satisfaction

would it be to him to return to his Father, to be possessed of that glory that he had with him before the world was!

4. Consider through what region, and through whose territories he went up. He went up through the region of the air, the territories of the devil, whose principal residence is in the air; therefore called "the prince of the power of the air" And how did it gall and torment that proud spirit, and all his apostate legions, to see the Captain of our salvation return in triumph through his kingdom, from the field of battle, carrying the spoils of the enemy along with him, every one of them obliged to bow at the sound of the name of *Jesus!*

5. Consider his levee or retinue that attended him when he went up. This seems to be pointed at, Psal. lxviii. 17: "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands of angels: the Lord is in the midst of them as in Sinai:" and then it follows, "Thou hast ascended up on high." Angels are called "the chariots of God;" his chariots of war, which he makes use of against his enemies; his chariots of conveyance, by which he transports his favourites into his house of many mansions, as we see in the case of Elijah and Lazarus; his chariots of state, that attend him in his solemn appearances. When he descended upon mount Sinai, at the delivery of the law, he was accompanied with myraids of angels; and now, after he had fulfilled and magnified the law, and made it honourable, as our surety, he returns to glory with these myriads of angels attending him, "The Lord is in the midst of them as in Sinai." O what a splendid train attended our Redeemer, when he went up in the invisible world of spirits!

THE SOLEMNITY OF CHRIST'S ASCENSION TO THE THRONE OF GLORY.

God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.—PSAL. XLVII. 5.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

AFTER a short recapitulation of the preceding heads, I go on in discoursing the solemnity of Christ's ascension to the throne of glory in our nature. And, therefore,—

6. We may here consider the spoils and trophies he carried along with him when he went up; for, "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive."

1*st*, Then, The head of the old serpent was among the spoils of Christ's victory, which he carried along with him. Our glorious and renowned Deliverer, encountered Goliath, and slew him with his own sword; "through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil;" "he brake the head of leviathan in the waters, and gave him to be meat to them that inhabit the wilderness." Christ's victory over principalities and powers on the cross, is a sweet banquet to believers travelling through the wilderness of this world.

2*dly*. The keys of the grave are among the spoils Christ carried with him when he went up with a shout: "Fear not; for I have the keys of hell and of death," Rev. i. 18. Christ descended into the grave, and came out of it again, carrying the gates of the grave (like Samson) away with him; and he proclaims to all his friends, "I have ransomed you from the power of the grave; I have redeemed them from death: O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction."

3*dly*, The debt-bond that we were owing to justice, retired and cancelled, is among the trophies of Christ's victory which he carried with him when he went up with a shout. In Col. ii. 14, we read of a "hand-writing that was against us, and contrary to us." What was it, but just the curse of the broken law, which we had all signed in our first father Adam, when he gave his consent to the covenant of works? By this all the race of Adam were bound to lie under the wrath and curse of God for ever. Well, Christ took this out of the way: by the nails of his cross the bond was cancelled and retired, for "he hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;" and this retired bond is among the trophies of his victory.

4*thly*, When he went up with a shout, he carried along with him the broken law, repaired, yea, "magnified, and made honourable," by his obedience to the death. "Christ was made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law:" and we may suppose, that when Christ ascended, he made a report to his Father, that, according to his orders, he had fulfilled the whole commands of the law, and so maintained the bonour of the justice, holiness, and sovereignty of God. 'O Father,' would he say, 'here is the holy law, which was broken by the sin of many, repaired, yea, magnified, and made honourable;' and upon which the Lord declares himself "well pleased for his righteousness' sake:" upon which the whole redeemed company cry with a loud voice, "Sing praises to God, sing praises: sing praises unto our King, sing praises."

5thly, When Christ ascended with a shout, he carried not only the keys of death, but the keys of the house of David along with him; that is, an absolute dominion, sovereignty, and headship over his church, and over all creatures for the church's sake: Is. xxii. 22: "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder: so he shall open, and none shall shut, and he shall shut, and none shall open." The key was the badge of authority and sovereignty; this is committed to an exalted Christ, it is a jewel of his crown; and it ill becomes either parliaments or assemblies to enact laws which do not bear the stamp of his authority upon them. Thus, you see some things that Christ carried with him when he ascended.

7. With respect to the solemnity of Christ's ascension, we may consider that he went up *with a shout*. And here,

1*st*, You may ask, Who were they that gave the shout? We read of nothing but a deep and silent gazing after him, as he went up from this lower world, Acts i. 9—11; where, then, was the shouting? *Answ.* The shouting was not in the church militant, but in the church triumphant, among an innumerable company of angels, and the spirits of just men made perfect: these "sons of God shouted for joy," when they saw their glorious head of redemption and confirmation coming in personally among them, with his vesture dipped in blood, and his name written on his thigh and vesture, "The King of kings, and the Lord of lords;" a "name above every name that can be named, whether in this world, or that which is to come." When a victorious general, after a long absence, and great dangers, returns back to the army, the whole army will welcome him with a shout; so the armies which were in heaven, "clothed with fine linen, white and clean," when they saw the Son of God coming in among them, wearing the nature of man with all the ensigns of glory and victory, shining with the brightness of his Father's glory and majesty; we may easily think that they would make heaven to ring with their hallelujahs and shouts.

2*dly*, You may ask, What kind of shouts were among that triumphant company, when the Lord Jesus went up to his throne and kingdom? *Answ.* We may easily suppose that it was,

(1.) A shout of approbation. Every one of the ransomed, all the angels, would approve of his conduct in the management of the great undertaking of redemption. O! says the Father, I am well pleased with him; and, in token thereof, I set him at my right hand of Majesty on high: and then the whole triumphant company would cry, Amen, hallelujah, for he has done all things well.

(2.) A shout of joy and gladness was heard when Christ ascended. "There is joy in heaven among the angels" when but one new member is added to his mystical body; how much more when Christ himself in person entered the upper regions of glory? How would they cry one to another then, as Rev. xix. 7: "Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready!"

(3.) A shout of praise and gratitude. Every harp would be tuned, and every tongue loosed, to cry as Rev. v. 9: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, and hast made us kings and priests unto our God:" and so every one casts down their crowns at his feet, saying, "Worthy art thou to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing."

(4.) A shout of admiration and adoration was heard among the triumphant company, when Christ went up. The dazzling beams of our Redeemer's glory, obliges the angels to cover their faces with their wings, when they see him upon his throne, high and lifted up, crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." When Israel saw the glory of Christ shining in the destruction of Pharaoh and his host, they were struck with wonder, saying, "Who is a God like unto thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" How much more would the ransomed in glory sing this song, when they saw all the enemies of our salvation drowned in the sea of divine wrath? Hence it follows,

(5.) That there was a shout of victory and triumph heard among the heavenly crowd, when Christ went up, like that, Exod. xv. 1, 3: "The Lord has triumphed gloriously.—The Lord is a man of war; the Lord is his name." And ver. 6, 7: "Thy right hand, O Lord, is become glorious in power: thy right hand, O Lord, hath dashed in pieces the enemy. And in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee: thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble." Thus, you see that God in our nature "went up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet."

IV. The *fourth* thing in the method, was, to "show what there is in the ascension of Christ that affords such ground of triumph." Here I will name a few things that may make us, even in a militant state, to fall a shouting with the church triumphant in heaven. Here, then, let us consider in what capacity and upon what business he is gone up; for he is

not gone up to heaven as other saints when they die, and depart to glory, in a private capacity; no, but he went up in a public capacity, in the name of his whole mystical body. More particularly,

1. God is gone up with a shout, as our forerunner, to open the way to glory, and to make a report of what was done in the days of his humiliation upon this earth: Heb. vi. 20: "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, who is made a high priest for ever after the order of Melchizedeck." As a forerunner, he rids the way, that we may follow him by faith into the holiest, and may follow him at death without fear of that last enemy, Rev. i. 17. And as a forerunner, he goes before to tell tidings, that the law is fulfilled, justice satisfied, and every thing agreed upon in the council of peace for the redemption of lost sinners actually accomplished. "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do," John xvii.: "Shout for joy, then, all ye that are upright in heart."

2. He has gone up as a victorious general, to receive a triumph after the battle. When man sinned, he fell under the power of Satan, the god of this world, and he was carrying all Adam's posterity away, as so many prisoners in chains; and when that question was put, "Shall the lawful captive be delivered, shall the prey be taken from the terrible?" angels and men were concluding that it was impossible, because not only was the enemy powerful, but he had the justice and faithfulness of God engaged in the penalty of the broken covenant of works on his side. Well, but says the glorious Redeemer, Emmanuel, the Son of God, "Even the lawful captive shall be delivered, the prey shall be taken from the terrible; and I will do it in a consistency with the law, and to the honour of God's holiness, justice, and sovereignty, and other perfections. Accordingly, he takes and bruises the head of the serpent in the satisfaction of justice; "he comes from Edom with dyed garments," like one that "treadeth in the wine fat;" and after the victory he goes up to heaven with a shout, "leading captivity captive;" and now he has made all his and our enemies his footstool: and may not this make all the redeemed to shout with the voice of triumph?

3. He is gone up as a bridegroom, to prepare a lodging for his bride, and to make suitable provision for her against the day of the consummation of the marriage: John xiv. 2, 3: "In my Father's house are many mansions:—I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Hast thou been determined, poor soul, to give heart and hand to this better Husband,

saying, "I am the Lord's, I will be for him, and not for another?" Well, here is good news, *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet;* and he is gone to make ready thy lodging and room in heaven, against the time when thou shalt follow him. Perhaps thou dwellest in a crazy house of clay now, that is always drooping, and thou art afraid every day it will fall down about thy ears; but, believer, the day of thy redemption draweth nigh, ere long the Bridegroom himself will come and fetch thee home to himself, and "thou shalt enter the King's palace with gladness and rejoicings, and mirth on every side; and thou shalt be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work, and presented unto him without spot or wrinkle," &c.

4. God is gone up with a shout in our nature, as "the great high priest of our profession:" Heb. iv. 14: "Having a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the son of God, let us hold fast our profession." And, chap. ix. 12: Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us." Heb. x. 21, 22. It was the ground of Israel's confidence towards God, when their priest went into the holy of holies, with the names of all the tribes of Israel in his breastplate, and was accepted of God; so it is the ground of our confidence and boldness, that our Jesus is passed into the heavens, "Having a high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart," &c. You were hearing yesterday in the action-sermon, that the high priest under the law had bells hung upon his garment, which made a sound when he entered into the holy of holies; by hearing of which the people of Israel, attending without the veil, knew that he was alive, which was the signal of their acceptance in him. Sirs, our great New Testament high priest, Christ Jesus, is gone within the veil to the holiest of all, not made with hands; but these days bygone, you have been hearing, and perhaps some of you at present are hearing, the sound of his bells, while worshipping without the veil. The preaching of the gospel is the sounding of his bells; every faithful minister is a bell hung upon the garment of our high priest; and whenever his spirit moves them in dispensing the word, the bell sounds, by which we "know that our Redeemer liveth;" and "blessed are the people that know this joyful sound."

5. God is gone up in our nature as "an advocate with the Father:" 1 John ii. 1: "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." There is a special emphasis in that word, "we have an advocate;" the meaning is, he is constituted and appointed to appear in our

cause, and negotiate in our affairs. Oh! lift up thy head, believer, do not doubt of the success of his negotiations; for his interest is so great in the court, that never any man's cause was lost in his hands; the Father always hears him: Heb. vii. 25: "Wherefore he is able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God through him, because he ever liveth to make intercession."

6. God is gone up as our exalted King. He is set down upon the throne, in the midst of the throne, and upon the right hand of the Majesty on high, and "he shall rule the house of David for ever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Men are combining together for the ruin of his kingdom at this day, violating his laws, changing the order of his house, beating their fellow-servants; but let all the children of Zion be joyful in their King, for he will make all these crooks of his administration even, before the day be ended; the reins being in his hand, he will ride upon the corruptions of men, and "the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of his wrath he will restrain."

7. He is gone up to mount Zion above, as the great Shepherd, to look after his sheep that are wandering in the wilderness. Although Christ, as to his human nature, be out of our sight, yet he is not so far off as to lose sight of us. Sirs, if your eyes were but strengthened, as Stephen's, to look through these heavens over your heads, you would see Jesus sitting at the right hand of God. And is it to be supposed, that he does not see his poor people upon earth, and know how it fares with them? "He that formed the eye, doth he not see?" Yea, he stands upon mount Zion above, and he has his eyes fixed upon every little sheep or lamb of his pasture; he tells all their wanderings; he is putting all their tears into his bottle; and there is not a sigh or a groan, that goes from the heart of any of his oppressed ones through the land at this day, but it goes to his very heart; and in a short time he will call the under-shepherds, that are beating and abusing his flock, to an account for their management; and in the mean time, however harshly they may be dealt with by others, yet "he will feed his flock like a shepherd, he will gather the lambs with his arms, he will carry them in his bosom, and gently lead those that are with young."

8. He is gone up as our glorious Representative, to take possession of the inheritance of eternal life, until his fellow-heirs, all believers whom he represents, follow him. Hence we are said to "sit together with him in heavenly places," Eph. ii. It is a very strange expression, "we sit in heavenly places with him," even while we are sitting upon the dunghill of this world, because he sits in heaven as our represen-

tative. There is a kind of mutual representation between Christ in heaven, and believers here upon earth. Christ in heaven represents us there; for "he appears in the presence of God for us:" and we, on the other hand, are his representatives here upon earth. The life of the believer in this world should just, as it were, picture forth the life of a living Christ in glory; hence the life of Jesus is said to be *manifested in us:* so that no man who looks on our walk and way in the world, but should presently know that Christ is living in heaven; "the life also of Jesus is manifested in us." Now, considering all these things, is it any wonder that Christ's going up to heaven in our nature, be attended with a shout of joy and triumph, among all the redeemed in the church militant or triumphant?

V. The *last* thing was the *Application* of this doctrine.

Use *first* may be in a word of *Information*, in these few particulars following:—

1. See hence that the ignominy of the cross of Christ is fully wiped away: "He was numbered with transgressors," called a *blasphemer*, &c. But now that cloud of ignominy is dispelled, *God is gone up with a shout;* he who was born in a stable, has the highest place in heaven; he who endured the cross, is wearing the crown; he who heard the blasphemy of men, is surrounded with the hallelujahs of saints and angels. And as it was with the head, so shall it be with the members, who now suffer reproach and shame for his cause.

2. See hence, that none need to think themselves dishonoured by suffering the hardest things for his sake. Why, he for whom we suffer, is *gone up with a shout;* he suffered worse things for us, than we can possibly endure for him; he was *made perfect by suffering*, and his cross was the way to the crown. Sirs, the very chains that are laid on a man for the cause of Christ, have a certain beauty and glory in them; hence "Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt: if we suffer with Christ, we shall also reign with him."

3. See hence how little reason believers have to be disquieted, because of the reelings and confusions of this lower world; even though heaven and earth were mingling, and seas roaring. Why *God is gone up with a shout;* he governs the world for the church's sake, and therefore nothing can go wrong, "No weapon formed against Zion shall prosper." Why, the church's Head, Patron, and Protector, sits on a throne on high, *He is gone up with a shout;* and therefore they who plot her ruin, shall be turned back, and taken in their own snare: Psal. cx. 5: "The Lord at thy right hand shall

strike through Kings in the day of his wrath, and break them as with a rod of iron," &c.

4. See hence the parallel, or similitude, between Christ's ascension, and his coming again to judgment. As he went up *with a shout*, and *the sound of a trumpet;* so in like manner he will descend from heaven *with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God:* but with this difference, that the shouts and sounds were not heard in this lower world when he went up; but when he descends or comes down to judge the world, the shouts of the Redeemer's voice, and the trump of God will sound so loud, as not only to startle them that are alive, but to awaken the dead that have lien in their graves for many thousand years.

Use *second*, of *Trial*. Try whether he that is gone up with a shout, be thy Husband, thy Head, thy Prophet, Priest, and King, thy Advocate, that so you may take the benefit and comfort of his ascension. And, to try this matter, I ask you,

1. Have you received his Spirit? for he went up to pour down his Spirit upon his members here below. "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you: but if I depart, I will send him unto you," John xvi. 7: "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." He is a holy Spirit, a praying Spirit, a Spirit of life and liberty, a public Spirit in a time of defection; when the house of Christ is turned into a den of thieves, the zeal of his house will eat you up.

2. Your hearts will be frequently mounting up on high after him, as upon eagles' wings. You will mount up after him in your esteem, saying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire besides thee." In your delight and desire: "The desire of my soul is to thee." and the remembrance of thy name. In meditation; "My meditation of him shall be sweet." You will be sending up many a cry in prayer after him, and the lifting up of your hands to him will be like the evening sacrifice; you will send up the prayers of faith like pillars of smoke, that went up when the sacrifices, mingled with incense, were offered under the law. You will send up not only the cry of prayers, but the cry of praise, like the church here, "Sing praises unto God, sing praises:" "Blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." If he be gone up as thy Head, thou wilt "seek those things that are above, where Christ is at the right hand of God:" and, like the woman clothed with the sun, you will trample upon the earth. You will be frequently looking up after him by the eye of faith. An affectionate wife will even take pleasure in

looking towards the quarter where her husband is; so is it with believers. Jonas, even in the belly of hell, cries, "Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple." And this will yield relief and comfort; "They looked unto him, and were lightened," &c. In a word, you will look to him for all the ends of his exaltation at the right hand of God. And since he is gone up to look after your affairs in heaven, you will look after his affairs here upon earth, according as he calls and employs you; you will be glad to "cause his name to be remembered in all generations;" and when his interest and people are suffering, it will go nearer your heart, than any private concern of your own, like David, Psal. cxxxvii. 6.

Use *third* of this doctrine may be of *Consolation* to all the friends of Christ in this reeling world wherein we are: *God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet.* And hence it will follow,

1. That thou shalt follow him ere it be long; for the head, when it goes up, will draw all the members after it: "Where I am, there shall also my servants be." Thy soul shall follow him at death, like the soul of Lazarus, under a guard of angels; and thy body shall follow him also at the resurrection, he will gather his saints together, they shall meet the Lord in the air, and sit with him upon his throne.

2. Is Christ gone up with a shout? then thou shalt not want the gifts, graces, and influences of the Spirit to bear you up, and to carry you through in the work and service that he has for you upon earth. Why, "when he ascended on high, he received gifts for men;" and what he received for us, he will give out to us according to our need. And therefore let us not fear to go his errands, though it were to go through fires and waters, for your charges shall be borne by him that is gone up with a shout.

3. Here is comfort under all the glooms and frowns of men in the world, for owning Christ, his cause, his kingdom, his truths, his ways, and people. Why, *God is gone up with a shout.* Christ has overcome the world, and all the wicked of the world, are Christ's *footstool*, Psal. cx. 1. God the Father has put all his enemies under his feet, and he makes tools and fools of them, and all their politics; for he "rules in the midst of his enemies," and "makes the wrath of man to praise him." The wrath of man has cast some of us out of the established church; but who knows ere all be done, but that "wrath of man shall praise him," and be turned about to the advancement of the interest of Christ, in this poor backslidden land, and to the revival of a covenanted work of reformation?

4. Here is comfort against the fear of the "roaring lion,

who goes about seeking whom he may devour." Why, Christ is *gone up with a shout*, and he has the lion in chains, and the upper end of the chain is in the hand of an exalted Redeemer: he had him under his command, when in a state of humiliation, as you see in the case of the Gadarenes' swine; much more now that he is ascended "far above all principality and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that can be named, whether in this world, or that which is to come." Ere long he will make the poor tempted believer to "tread Satan under his feet."

5. Here is comfort: all the angels in heaven are upon thy side, believer, all the armies of heaven are ready to fight the quarrel of his church; they want nothing but his word of command, for he is "in the midst of them as in Sinai; and are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister unto the heirs of salvation?" &c. Psal. xxxiv. 7: "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him."

6. Here is comfort; death is disarmed of its sting, and can do no hurt. Why, Christ carried the sting of death, and the armour of this king of terrors with him, when he *went up with a shout*. "I have the keys of hell and of death."

7. Here is comfort; thy life is well secured, believer: Why, it *is hid in* him who is *gone up with a shout:* Col. iii. 3: "Our life is hid with Christ in God. And when Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall we also appear with him in glory."

8. Here is comfort, that all providential dispensations in the government of the world, or in thy own lot in particular, shall be managed to advantage: Rom. viii. 28: "All things shall work together for good, to them that love God." Why, *God is gone up with a shout*, and God has "given him to be head over all things unto the church, which is his body." And, therefore, though black and gloomy dispensations should cast up, so as the "confused noise of the warrior, and garments rolled in blood," should be heard and seen in every corner of the land; yet *God is gone up with a shout*, and "he rules even in the raging of the sea, and when the waves thereof roar, he stilleth them again;" and he usually makes worldly shakings to usher in his own coming in a way of grace to his people: "I will shake all nations, and the desire of all nations shall come." Thus, you see that this doctrine is wonderfully comfortable to all the true friends of Christ.

Use *fourth* of the doctrine shall be of *Exhortation*. Is it so that Christ is gone up with a shout to the right hand of the Majesty on high? then,

1. Be exhorted to behold him with the eye of faith upon the throne; for he that was "made a little lower than the

angels," is now "crowned with glory and honour: and therefore go forth, ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his" Father "crowned him," when *he went up with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet.* His Father is beholding him with infinite delight, and he would have all the world to behold him also: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.—Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." He himself is fond that we should cast our eyes upon him: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth." Oh how stately is he upon the throne with all his nobles about him!

2. Lift up the everlasting doors of your hearts, that this King of glory may come in. The gates of heaven were opened for him, when he went up *with a shout;* and shall not the gates of our hearts be opened to him, when he comes knocking with the rod of his mouth, saying, "Open unto me, and I will come in?" &c. Oh! let him who has now the principal room in heaven, have also the principal room in your hearts and souls.

3. Is he gone up with a shout? Then "let us come with boldness unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help us in time of need:" for he is gone up as "our great High Priest and Advocate (as you heard,) to appear in the presence of God for us." Thou hast a friend upon the throne, believer, who hath "all the fulness of the Godhead dwelling in him bodily; and it is nothing between you and him, but "ask, and ye shall receive, and your joy shall be full. "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God, who giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not."

4. Is he gone up to the throne with a shout, and with the sound of a trumpet? Then let all the world, angels, men, and devils, reverence him, and do him homage; let "every knee bow unto him, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and let every tongue confess, that his name is above every name; that he alone is the Lord, to the glory and praise of his eternal Father." Sirs, the knee that will not bow to him shall break. They that are setting up their authority, in opposition to his authority, his laws, and government, and oppressing his poor people, dearly will they pay for it: "He will break all his enemies as with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel."

5. See that you have a due regard to the laws and liberties of his house, and the interests of his glory and kingdom. Men are trampling these under their feet at this day; but whatever others do, keep by the laws of Christ as your rule, and "do not receive for doctrines the commandments of men.

Contend earnestly for the faith delivered unto the saints; and stand fast in the liberties wherewith Christ hath made you free, that you be not entangled with yokes of bondage;" and when you give a testimony for Christ, "hold it fast, that no man take your crown.—Be faithful unto the death," and he that is gone up with a shout, will call you off the field of battle, and give you the crown of joy, the "crown of life and righteousness; and not to you only, but to all that love his appearing."

6. Is he gone up with a shout? Then let us never be ashamed of him before men, for he is our credit and ornament; he is not ashamed to confess us before his Father, and before his angels: let us therefore have his name written on our foreheads, like these hundred forty and four thousand, who stand with him upon mount Zion, Rev. xiv. 1; so as every one may know that we belong to him, and wear his livery.

7. *Lastly*, Let us join in the solemnity of his exaltation, for it is not yet ended. They that shouted when he went first up to heaven from mount Olivet, are shouting for joy to this day; and therefore let us join in the concert. When he came into Jerusalem riding upon an ass, a great company shouted, and cried, saying, "Hosanna to the Son of David;" how much more doth it become us to shout and celebrate his praises, when, instead of riding upon an ass, he is "riding in the heavens by his great name JAH, and in his excellency on the skies." I conclude with that exhortation, Is. xii., last verse, "Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion: for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee."

SERMON XXVII.

THE WRATH OF MAN BOUNDED BY THE POWER OF GOD.*

Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.—PSAL. LXXVI. 10.

THE seventy interpreters call this psalm *a song upon the Assyrians;* which makes many good interpreters to think that it was penned upon the occasion of the defeat of Sennacherib's army by an angel, when they came up and besieged Jerusalem, in the days of Hezekiah. Others think, that it was penned upon the occasion of the victory in the days of Jehoshaphat, recorded 2 Chron. xx. 28. It is not very material which of the two; and therefore I shall not stand to decide the controversy. We find the church here making a threefold improvement of this glorious appearance of God in his providence on her behalf. (1.) She improves it to the honour of Israel's God, ascribing the whole praise and glory of it to him, ver. 3, 7—9: "He brake the arrows of the bow," &c. (2.) To the perpetual disgrace of Israel's enemies, ver. 5, 6. (3.) To the consolation of the true Israel of God in all ages, in the words read, *Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee,* &c.

In which words we have a twofold assertion, and confirmation of the truth of both.

1. The *first* assertion is, that *the wrath of man shall praise God.* Wrath is anger accented to the highest pitch, or blown up into a flame. *The wrath of man* (in the original, it is, *the wrath of Adam,* or *the wrath of clay,* weak impotent man) *shall praise thee;* that is, it shall turn to the praise and glory of God, through his over-ruling providence, though quite otherwise intended. God will bring honour to himself, and serve his own holy and wise ends and designs out of it. What way God brings glory to himself out of the wrath and rage of man against him, his interest and people, may be declared more fully afterward. The *second* assertion in the words is, *The remainder of his wrath shalt thou restrain. The remainder*

* Preached at Stirling, upon the occasion of the violent ejection of the four brethren from ministerial communion with the established church.

of his wrath: that is, what is left behind of the wrath of man, when God has glorified himself thereby. Even after God has defeated the purposes of wicked men, and made them contribute to his glory, yet there is abundance of wrath remaining; for *wrath*, in the latter part of the text, is in the plural number *wraths;* that is, great wrath, or abundance of wrath remaining. But what becomes of that wrath that is left; God shall *restrain* it. The word signifies, to *gird up*. However God may see fit to slacken the bridle of his providence, and suffer wicked men to vent their wrath and enmity, as far as it shall contribute to his glory; yet the surplus and remainder of his wrath, that is not for his glory, and his people's profit, God will gird it up, that they shall not get it vented. But then,

2. We have in the words the ratification, or confirmation of the truth of these two assertions, in that word *surely;* as if he had said,—However the weak faith of God's people may shake and stagger; however their hearts may be moved like the trees of the wood, when the wind and rage of man's wrath is blowing: and though unbelief may suggest, that the rage of man shall turn to the dishonour of God, the hurt of his people, the ruin of his interest; yet surely it shall be quite otherwise, for God, who cannot lie, has said it; and therefore there is not the least peradventure respecting the security of it, that *the wrath of man shall praise him.*

From the words, thus opened, we may,

Observe 1. *That the wicked and ungodly world are filled with great wrath against the children and people of God.* Such a wrath had Cain against Abel, and Haman against Mordecai.

Obs. 2. *That the wrath of man shall certainly turn to the praise and glory of God. Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee*

Obs. 3. *That the wrath of man, however outrageous, is bounded by God.* As he sets bounds to the raging sea, saying, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed;" so he girds up the remainder of man's wrath, that it shall not go one inch beyond the bounds that he has appointed to it.

I do not design to confine myself at present to any of these propositions, but shall endeavour to discourse upon the words of the text in the following order and method:—

I. I would speak a little of the wrath of man.

II. How it is that the wrath of man praises God, and why God will have it so.

III. Prove, that God restrains the remainder of man's wrath, and how he does it.

IV. Make some improvement of the whole.

I. The *first* thing is, to *speak a little of the wrath of man.* And here I shall endeavour to do two things: 1. Show what the wrath of man imports. 2. Why man has such wrath against God and his people.

First, What the wrath of man imports?

Answ. 1. It imports the wickedness of man's nature, and its enmity against God; for wrath against God, against his laws, against his interest or people, is just the fruit and product of depraved nature. Hence it is, that the "Heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing: they break his bands and cast away his cords from them," saying with Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that we should obey him?"

2. This expression, *the wrath of man*, imports the weakness and impotence of it: it is but the wrath of *Adam*, or of *red clay*, as I noticed in the explication. How contemptibly does the Spirit of God speak of man, and of the power of man, in scripture? "Cease ye from man, whose breath is in his nostrils: for wherein is he to be accounted of?" The wrath of man, when it is lengthened out to its utmost boundaries, can only go the length of killing the body, or of breaking the sheath of clay in which the soul lodges, and then it can do no more.

3. It imports the rashness and precipitancy of it; for a man in wrath is just hurried with pride and passion, without regard either to the principles of reason or religion. Hence it is, that men in wrath or rage, are hurried into such acts and inconveniences, as causes smart and torment when they come to cool blood.

4. It implies the fierceness of it. With what eagerness of spirit do men in wrath prosecute their designs? How furious was Esau in persecuting his brother Jacob? With what fury did Nebuchadnezzar pursue his resentment against the three children, who refused to bow down to his idol-god!

5. It implies the illegality and arbitrariness of it." A man in wrath has no regard either to the laws of God or man, being fully under the law of his own lusts; such as, malice, revenge, pride, and the like corruption.

Secondly, I come to inquire, whence is it that wicked men have so great wrath against God, his people, and interest?

Answ. 1. This flows from the power of Satan in and over them; for he rules in the hearts of the children of disobedience: Rev. xii. 12: "Wo to the inhabitants of the earth, and of the sea; for the devil is come down unto you in great

wrath, because he knoweth that his time is short." The devil is filled with rage against the church of Christ, compared there to "a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet." And how is it that the devil vents his rage against the church, but by setting wicked men under his government at work to persecute and oppress her? Hence, when the wicked casts God's people into prison, it is said to be done by the devil: Rev. ii.: "The devil shall cast some of you into prison; and ye shall have tribulation ten days." And they cannot but run fast whom the devil drives.

2. This flows from the power of natural enmity against God and his interest, which is nothing else but the poison and venom of the devil's malice infused into the souls of wicked men; and when the devil has any ill turn to do in the world, he has no more ado, but to say to this, or the other lust of the heart, Go, and it goes; and to another, Come, and it cometh. The wheel of corrupt nature just rolls as the devil would have it.

3. They are filled with wrath against the people of God, because their own works are evil, and the works of the other good. This was the reason why Cain slew his brother Abel, 1 John iii. 12.

4. Because God's people seek the good of the church of Christ upon earth, but the wicked seek to destroy it. The one prays for the peace of Jerusalem, and takes pleasure in her stones and rubbish; whereas the wicked seek to ruin it; they cry, "Rase, rase Jerusalem to the foundation:" and therefore they cannot but be filled with rage against those that cross their measures. This much for the *first* thing in the method.

II. The *second* thing was, to *inquire how it is that the wrath of man praises God?*

I premise, that God is praised among men two ways, either in an active, or in a passive way. 1. Actively, by saints and angels in the church militant and triumphant, where *praise waiteth for him* continually, Psal. lxv. 1. 2. Passively, and thus every thing that hath a being praises God. The birds of the air, the beasts of the field, the fishes of the sea, the sun, moon, and stars, heaven and earth, and every creature, praises its glorious Creator, Psal. xix.: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," &c.

Quest. How is it that the wrath of man praises God?

Answ. God levies a tribute of praise out of the wrath of man,

1. By making it to redound to the glory of his name, and

the illustration of the perfections of his nature. He glorifies his power by ruling and over-ruling all the motions of their corrupt minds and actions; for "wherein they deal proudly, he is above them;" they are all under the check and control of his all-governing hand, for "he rules in the midst of his enemies." He glorifies his wisdom many times in frustrating their designs against his church and people, and by taking them in their own gins, Job v. 12, 13. He disappoints the devices of the crafty, so that their hands cannot perform their enterprises; he taketh the wise in their own craftiness, and the counsel of the froward is turned headlong. He turns the wrath of man to the praise of his own justice and severity; for all the time that the wicked are raging against God and his interest, they are "treasuring up to themselves wrath against the day of wrath;" and God's righteous judgment, when it is actually revealed against them, becomes hereby the more conspicuous and apparent to the world. He turns the wrath of man to the praise of his adorable sovereignty. Never have the Lord's people had such awful impressions of the sovereignty of God, as when they have been in the furnace of man's wrath, then they become dumb with silence. When the Chaldean and Sabean robbers are let loose to plunder, and spoil the substance of Job, he is made to view adorable sovereignty in it, saying, "The Lord gave, the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." It is in such a case as this, that God says to his own people, "Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen." Thus the Lord levies praise, from the wrath of man.

2. The wrath of man shall praise God, by making it subservient to the advancement of his own work in and about his church. The wrath of man would seem to ruin the church; but God makes use of it to help up the building, though such a thing does not enter into their hearts.

Quest. What work of God about the church is advanced by the wrath of men.

Answ. In these few particulars, which I do not insist upon, because I had occasion to speak to them, when upon another text.

1*st*, His discovering work; for by the wind of man's wrath, he separates between the precious and the vile, betwixt the chaff and the wheat. In the day of the church's prosperity and quiet, hypocrites and true believers are mingled together, like the chaff and wheat on the barn-floor; but the Lord, like the husbandman, opens the door of his barn, and puts the wind of man's wrath through it, that the world may know which is which. O sirs, much chaff is cast up alrea-

dy, both among ministers and professors; but it is likely the wind and sift may cast up much more yet ere all be done.

2*dly*, God's purging work is advanced among his own children by the wrath of man; there is much of the dross of corruption cleaves to the Lord's people while in the wilderness. Now, the Lord heats the furnace of man's wrath, and casts his people into it, that when he has tried them, he may bring them forth as gold. "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged.—He washes away the filth of the daughter of Zion, and purges the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning."

3*dly*, God's uniting work is thus advanced in a time of peace, and external tranquillity. The sheep of Christ scatter and divide among themselves; but God lets loose the dogs upon them, and then the flock runs together; or, like pieces of metal cast into the fire, they run together in a lump.

4*thly*, God's enlarging work, or his work of spreading the gospel, is sometimes advanced by the wrath of man, Acts viii. 1—5. The gospel, like the camomile, the more it is trodden upon, the more it spreads.

3. The wrath of man praises God, by ministering matter of praise to the saints of God in the wilderness. The wrath of Pharaoh and of the Egyptians made up a part of Israel's song, Exod. xv.: "The enemy said, I will pursue, I will overtake, I will divide the spoil: my lust shall be satisfied upon them, I will draw my sword, my hand shall destroy them:" and, oh! what praise did it beget, when the heat of their wrath was quenched in the deeps of the sea, and they were made to "sink like lead in the mighty waters!"

4. God many times extorts praise to himself out of the mouths of his enemies, especially when they see God taking the field against them in a way of terrible majesty. Exod. xiv. 24, 25. Pharaoh, and his armies and chariots, pursue Israel into the midst of the Red sea; thereupon the Lord looks upon the host of the Egyptians with a frown, through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and takes off their chariot wheels, makes them to drive heavily, and so troubles them; upon which they are forced to praise the God of Israel by a solemn acknowledgment, "Come," say they, "let us flee before Israel; for the Lord fighteth for them." And thus you see how it is that the wrath of man doth praise the Lord.

And if you ask me, Why is it that the wrath of man shall pay this tribute of praise to God? I answer,

1. Because all beings must pay this tribute to the Supreme Being on whom they depend. "Of him, and through him,

and to him are all things;" and therefore to him must "be glory and praise for ever," Rom. xi. "God made all things for himself; and the wicked for the day of evil," says Solomon.

2. Because God loves to frustrate and baffle the devil and all his instruments. They design to dishonour God, and to ruin his interests in the world; but even that which was intended for their hurt, is turned about to their advantage. Thus in the death of Christ, the devil and his agents intended no less than the total defeat of the design of his incarnation, and they thought, that when they got him in the grave, all was safe and sure; and yet the very cross and death of Christ is made a triumphant chariot, in which Christ "spoils principalities and powers, making a show of them openly in it."

3. God will have it so, that his people may trust him and glorify him in a way of believing, waiting and depending on him even in the worst of times; like Abraham, the father of the faithful, "who against hope believed in hope, and staggered not at the promise through unbelief." The day of the wrath of man, is a day when God is especially calling us to put our trust in him, according to the example of David, Psal. lix. 9; "Because of his strength (that is, the strength, power, and rage of the enemy) will I wait upon thee: for thou art my defence."

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to *inquire how is it that God restrains the remainder of man's wrath? Answ.* He has various ways of doing it. As,

1. He sometimes restrains their wrath, by converting them; a cast of converting grace will make the "wolf to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to lie down peaceably with the kid." So Saul, Acts ix., when he is breathing out death and slaughter against the disciples and followers of Christ, God meets him in his way to Damascus, and gives him such a turn, that persecuting Saul becomes a preaching Paul. It is easy with God to wrest a weapon out of the devil's hand, and turn it against him and his kingdom.

2. Sometimes by diverting them from their design, as he did Sennacherib for awhile, when his wrath was bent against God's Israel: God raises up the inhabitants of Libnah against him, a rumour of which obliged him to desist from his wrathful enterprise at that time, 2 Kings xix. 7. So, 1 Sam. xxiii. 27, 28, in the case of David and Saul, God sends the Philistines to give him a diversion from pursuing after David. It is easy for God to give wicked men another tow in their rock, than to molest the Lord's people, whom they otherwise would swallow up quick.

3. Sometimes by destroying them, as he did Pharaoh and the Egyptians when pursuing Israel, as we observed just now: "Envy slays the silly one."

4. By putting favourable thoughts of God's people in the hearts of their enemies, by which their wrath is stayed; for "when a man's ways please the Lord, he" many times causes "their enemies to be at peace with him." Thus the heart of Nebuchadnezzar was turned toward the three children, whom he threw into a furnace one seven times heated, Dan. ii. 46—48. See the like, Dan. v. 29: "The hearts of kings are in the hand of the Lord, and he turns them as the rivers of waters." How easy is it for God to give orders even to the earth to help the woman, and befriend her.

5. Sometimes by disclosing their secrets, and revealing their angry and wrathful plots against the church and people of God. Thus the secret plots of the king of Assyria were disclosed and revealed to the king of Israel, by the prophet Elisha, by which his design against Israel was baffled, and his rage stayed.

6. Sometimes by blunting their courage, and taking away both heart and hand from them: "The stout-hearted are spoiled, and none of the men of might find their hands," when God binds them. Sometimes he just confuses and confounds the enemies of his church and people, by things which can do them little or no harm. Thus the Midianites, Judg. vii., are disordered and confounded with the sound of the trumpets, and the breaking of Gideon's pitchers; and the Moabites are confounded and defeated by the shining of the sun upon the waters, 2 Kings iii. &c.

IV. The *fourth* thing was the *Use* of the whole. Use *first* may be of *Information*, in the few following particulars. Is it so, as you have heard, that wicked men are so full of wrath against God, his people, and interest? Then,

1. See hence the corruption and depravation of nature: "The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born." When we see a wicked world full of envy, wrath, and malice, against Christ and his interest, taking all imaginable ways they can think upon to ruin and rase it, we may clearly see in this, that man's nature is not now what it once was; "every thought and imagination of the heart is only evil, and continually evil." And hence it is, that there is so much of the foam of profanity, cursing, lying, swearing, drinking, uncleanness, Sabbath-breaking, and other evils break out of it, to the dishonour of God, and the scandal and reproach of our holy religion. Oh! how

much need of converting work in our day, which, alas! is at such a melancholy stand!

2. See, from what is said, the folly and madness of sinners who fight against God, and his cause and interest: why, they can never prevail; for God turns matters about so in the event, that the *wrath of man shall praise him;* God's end shall be reached, and not theirs. So that they who fight against God, are like madmen, rushing their heads against a wall of brass; they may well dash themselves in pieces, but they shall never do any hurt to the cause of God: *The wrath of man shall praise him.*

3. See hence, that there is a holy and over-ruling providence in the most gloomy and threatening dispensations that befall God's people. The wrath of man, that would seem to swallow up the poor people of God, is under the check and management of a holy and wise providence. We are ready, when God's way is in the sea, and in the whirlwind, to cry out, Now all is gone, the interest of Christ will sink, and God will be dishonoured; but stay a little, "He that believes shall not make haste;" there is a *wheel within a wheel,* which will turn matters about so, as *the wrath of man shall praise God,* and advance his interest, instead of ruining it.

4. See hence a notable antidote against the slavish fear of man's wrath, which causes a snare, especially in a day when the wicked walk on every side, and the vilest of men are advanced to power and authority; and they employing their power to oppress God's people, and to ruin his interest. Why, what ground is there to fear the wrath of man, when God has said, that *the wrath of man shall praise him, and the remainder of it he will restrain?* "Who art thou, that art afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man that shall be as grass? and forgettest the Lord thy Maker?" Sirs, let us never step out of God's road through the fear of man, great or small. Why, *the wrath of man shall praise the Lord.* In shunning the wrath of man by any sinful shift, we "run upon the bosses of God's buckler."

5. See hence, that "it is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in men: better to trust in the Lord, than to put confidence in princes." By trusting in the Lord, we are under his protection, who has devils and men under his command; and by trusting in man, we throw ourselves out from under the care and providence of God. "Cursed is the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord."

6. See whence it is that the church of Christ has been preserved, in all ages, amidst the greatest storms, when hell and earth have been raging, and plotting her ruin. Why, here is

the ground of it, God has always so ordered matters, as to make *the wrath of man to praise him*, and to advance his interest; and what of man's wrath did not praise God, that God has restrained. The church of Christ is like a ship at sea, meeting with a great variety of winds; but the skilful pilot, by his wise management, makes an advantage of every wind that blows, to carry him forward to the desired haven, and to a safe landing at last. Our skilful pilot, the Lord Jesus, on whose shoulders the government is laid, well knows how to gather the winds, and to manage the sails of the ship, so as to bring his people at last to the eternal wished for haven of glory, through the stormy and contrary winds of man's wrath, and the rage of devils; *for the wrath of man shall praise him*, &c.

7. This doctrine should teach us to bear injuries, especially for the cause of Christ, with a great deal of meekness, patience, and quietness of spirit, and to refer our cause to the Lord, when suffering wrongfully at the hand of man. Why, you see that the wrath of man is in the hand of the Lord, and whenever he sees it for his glory, and our good, he will *restrain* it, and likewise repay it; "for vengeance is mine, saith the Lord." When we resent our quarrels with our own hand, we take it out of the hand of God; and therefore let us follow the example of Christ, who, "when he was reviled, reviled not again, and when he suffered, he threatened not," leaving his cause in his Father's hand; and we see now what is to come of it: the poor Jews, who imprecated his blood to be upon them and their children, have been smarting under the weight of God's hand these seventeen hundred years.

Use *second* may be of *Exhortation*. Is it so that *the wrath of man shall praise the Lord?* namely, in a passive way, does he levy this tribute of praise out of the wrath and wickedness of man? Then let us all be concerned to praise and glorify him in an active way and manner.

Mot. 1. This is the end and design of our very being; it is the chief end of man, that we should be to the glory of him that made us; and God will levy glory to himself upon us one way or another; and therefore let us study the end of our being, by being active to advance his glory in our day.

Mot. 2. This is the end of our effectual calling and new creation in Jesus Christ: "This people have I formed for myself, that they should show forth my praise. Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood," &c. 1 Pet. ii. 9.

Mot. 3. This is the end of our redemption by Christ: "Ye are not your own, but ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God with your bodies and spirits, which are his.

Mot. 4. This is the end of your election from eternity. Why did God set his love upon any of Adam's race, but that they might praise him? Eph. i.: "He hath chosen us to himself, he hath predestinated us unto the adoption of children," that we should be "to the praise of the glory of his grace."

Mot. 5. This is the work in which all the creatures round about you are employed. "All his works praise him;" and therefore let his "saints bless him," saying, as David, Psal. ciii., "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

Ques. How shall we praise him in an active way, whom the very wrath of man shall praise.

Answ. 1. By believing in the name of his Son, and setting to the *seal*, that the *record* of God *is true.* Thus Abraham believed God, by "not staggering at the promise through unbelief: for he was strong in the faith, and thereby gave glory to God."

2. By being obedient to his commands, and having a well ordered conversation; for fruitful professors are the glory of Christ, and the ornament of his garden: "They shall be called the trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, in whom he will be glorified. Psal. l. 23.: "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright, will I show the salvation of God."

3. By a steady adherence to him, his cause and interest, the rights of his crown and kingdom, when the wrath of man would rob us of them; hence we are called at such a time to "contend earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints," and to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free;" and when we willingly walk after the commandments of men, and quit his cause, we cast a reflection upon him, as if neither he, nor his truths or cause, were worthy the contending for.

4. By a cheerful suffering for him, whenever he shall call us to it, saying, with Paul, "I am ready not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of Jesus." Sirs, we must lose our lives some time or other, and we can never lose them more honourably than by dying for the name of Christ. This is the Christian's bed of honour, and if any man *lose his life* for Christ, he *shall find it;* it will come again to him with advantage, both at death and the resurrection of the body.

Use *third* shall be in a word of *Encouragement* to the poor people of God, who are at this day oppressed and borne down in their spiritual rights and privileges, by an ecclesiastical tyranny, and who, perhaps, for adhering to their liberties as Christians, and to the rights and immunities of the

church of Christ, are also exposed to the wrath of their superiors. I only suggest these two or three things from the text for your encouragement.

1. It is not the wrath of God, but *the wrath of* worm man that you lie exposed to, and his wrath can go but short way; and therefore, "Who art thou, O man, that art afraid of man?"

2. As it is *the wrath of man*, so this wrath shall *praise the Lord;* and if God get a tribute of praise out of the wrath of man, it may make us to endure it with the greater patience. Men will plant their ground even in cold and stormy weather, in expectation of a plentiful harvest. Sirs, if God get a harvest of glory and praise, we may with patience and pleasure allow the ploughers to plough upon our back, for ploughing time will soon be over, and the harvest time will come; and "they that sow in tears, shall reap in joy."

3. If any wrath of man remain beyond what shall bring in a revenue of praise to God, he will *restrain it*, and bind it up like the waters of a mill: he will suffer as much of the current of water to run upon the wheel, as serves to carry it about and grind his corn, but the remainder of the water he sets it off another way; so God will let out as much of the current of man's wrath as shall serve the ends of his glory and our good, but the remainder of the stream and current he will *restrain*, and turn another way. Is. xxviii., there we are told that God will not be always "threshing his corn, nor break it with the wheel of his cart, nor bruise it with his horsemen. This cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel, and excellent in working."

4. *Lastly*, All this comfort is sure and certain; there is not the least peradventure about it, that the flame of man's wrath shall praise the Lord, and the superfluous fire shall be quenched, or hemmed in; for here we have God's parole of honour for it, *Surely the wrath of man shall praise him; and the remainder of his wrath he will restrain.*

SERMON XXVIII.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.*

My name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE FIRST SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

These words are a part of the instructions that God delivered to Moses for the use of the church of Israel, from mount Sinai. They were now upon their march through the howling wilderness towards the land of Canaan, which God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and to their seed: and, to encourage them against the fears of wandering, or losing their way, he assures them of a safe convoy, and that under an infallible guide.

More particularly, in these two verses I have read, notice,—

1. A gracious promise of Christ, as a leader and commander to Israel: ver. 20: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to lead thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared." This angel was none other than Christ, the great and uncreated Angel of the covenant, as is evident by comparing this text with Exod. xxxiv. 34; Acts vii. 38, 39; 1 Cor. x. 9; Exod. xiii. 21, and Exod. xiv. 19: and we find in the context, that the pardon of sin is ascribed to him, which is God's prerogative alone. Christ is called an *Angel*, because he is the great messenger of heaven to this lower world, "the sent of God," as the word signifies. And here he comes as a guide and guardian to Israel, in their travels through the wilderness to the promised land, which was a type and shadow of what he was to be, and what he would do to his church and people under the New Testament, according to that promise, Is. lv. 4: "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people." Observe, It is glorious encouragement to the tra-

* Twelve sermons, the first of which was preached in September, 1734, at the sacrament at the Queensferry, and afterwards enlarged upon in his own church at Stirling.

vellers to glory to hold on their way, that Christ goes before them as the *breaker up* of their way: "Behold, I send mine Angel before thee," &c. See also to this purpose, Mic. ii., last verse: "The breaker is come up before them: they have gone forth, they have passed through the gate; their King shall pass before them, and the Lord of hosts on the head of them."

2. We have here the charge that is given to Israel with reference to this Angel, Jesus Christ: "Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not." As if he had said, take care that you follow his counsel, obey his commandments, and behave yourselves with all suitable regard towards him, without grieving his Spirit, by turning aside to the ways of your own hearts; let him have full trust and credit, and beware of disobedience or rebellion against him.

3. We have an awful certification in case of disobedience and obstinacy in sin: "He will not pardon your transgressions." *Quest.* How does this agree with that title given him, Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7: "The Lord God, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin?" Or with that promise, "I, even I am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own name's sake?" *Answ.* Although he pardons the iniquities of the wicked, that forsake their wicked ways and sinful thoughts, and turn to God through him, yet he will not pardon the iniquities of the obstinate and impenitent sinner: no, "he will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of all them that go on in their trespasses." Or the meaning may be, He will not pardon your transgressions without a ransom or satisfaction; and in this sense we are told, in the forecited Exod. xxxiv. 7, "He will by no means clear the guilty;" he will by no means justify the guilty sinner, without a perfect righteousness provided and accepted.

4. We have here a weighty reason given why they were to obey his voice, and to beware of provoking him; why, says the Lord, *My name is in him.*

Where two things are to be considered, (1.) The great means by which God makes himself known among the children of men, and that is his name. (2.) Where this name of God is to be read and seen in its brightest characters, even in Christ, the Angel of the covenant, who is the image of the invisible God: *My name is in him.* The words will be farther cleared in prosecuting the following observation:

DOCT. "That an awful regard is due to Christ, our glorious Immanuel, because the name of God is in him. Beware of him and obey his voice, provoke him not:" *for my name is in him.*

Now, in discoursing upon this doctrine, through divine pity, I shall endeavour to observe the following order:—

I. I would mention what the name of God is, and prove that it is in Christ.

II. Give you some of the qualities of the name of God as displayed in Christ.

III. How or in what manner is the name of God in him.

IV. Why it is in him.

V. Make some practical improvement on the whole.

I. The *first* thing is, to *inquire what is the name of God as revealed in the word, and show that every one of his names is in Christ.*

1. Then, the name of God is just God himself; Psal. xx. 1: "The name of the God of Jacob defend thee;" that is, the God of Jacob himself be thy defence, Psal. cxv. 1: "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory;" that is unto thee be the glory. The word *name* is frequently in scripture put for the thing or being designed by it, as Acts i. 15, it is said, "The number of the names were a hundred and twenty;" that is, the number of the persons. So here, says God, *My name*, that is, my very being and essence, *is in him.* And that is so indeed, is evident beyond all contradiction from John xiv. 11: "I am in the Father, and the Father in me." John xiv. 7: "If ye had known me, ye should have known my Father also: and from henceforth ye know him, and have seen him." To which Philip replies, ver. 8: "Lord, show us the Father, and it sufficeth us." Christ answers, ver. 9, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? he that hath seen me, hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, Show us the Father?" So that you see God himself is in Christ, 2 Cor. v. 19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." And if you would know who Christ is, and what he is, the apostle will tell you, that he is just *God* himself *manifested in the flesh*, 1 Tim. iii. last. Oh! sirs, pause here, stand still, and wonder at this strange thing that God has wrought in the earth; the divine and human nature linked together in a personal union in our glorious Immanuel. So, then, the meaning of the words, *My name is in him*, is all one as if he had said, I am in him, my nature, my being and essence is in him; and therefore, whenever you look on him, behold me in him; for he is "in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God." Sirs, beware of the mistaken and blasphemous notions of Christ that some, particularly the blasphemous Arians and Socinians, would give you, as though he were a different be-

ing, and of a distinct and inferior nature from his Father; for he and the Father are one, 'the same in substance, equal in power and glory.' "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." So then, I say, the name of God in Christ, is just God himself; and this will farther appear, from what is to follow. And therefore,—

2. God's name is his titles that are peculiar to himself; and these we find in scripture are every where ascribed to Christ, the Angel of the covenant. To mention a few; his name is JEHOVAH. This is a name peculiar to the self-existent, supreme, and independent God, who hath his being of himself, without depending upon another, even "him who is, and was, and is to come." "Thy name alone is JEHOVAH, most high over all the earth." This great name we find frequently ascribed to Christ, with some additional epithets. To encourage your faith, he is sometimes designated JEHOVAH-ZABAOTH, "the Lord of hosts," to show his absolute authority, that he has all power in heaven and in earth, and the armies of both under his command. Sometimes he is called JEHOVAH-ROPHI, because he heals the broken in heart, and binds up all their wounds. Sometimes JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU, "the Lord our righteousness," because he brings in an everlasting righteousness for the justification of condemned sinners. Sometimes JEHOVAH-SHAMMAH, "the Lord is there," because he is with his people always, unto the end of the world. Sometimes JEHOVAH-JIREH, "the Lord will see or provide," because, when the poor and needy seek water, he will hear, help, and supply. Sometimes JEHOVAH-NISSI, because he gives a "banner unto them that fear him, that it may be displayed because of truth."

3. God's name is his word; for by it he makes his mind known to the children of men. And this name of his is in Christ: hence he is called, by way of eminence, "the Word of God," John i. 1—3, 14; Rev. xix. 13: "his name is called, The Word of God." Hence, when the Word of God, or the precious truths of the gospel are held, Christ reckons his name held. Rev. ii. 13, says the Lord to the church of Pergamos, "I know thy works, that thou holdest fast my name, and hast not denied my faith." *Thou holdest fast my name;* that is, thou retainest the gospel in its purity. The whole word of God, and all the truths of it, are in Christ; he is the great oracle of Heaven that reveals them: Rev. v. no man was found able to open the book with the seven seals, till the Lion of the tribe of Judah did it. All the commands of the law of God, are issued to us in and through him; hence says the Lord here to Israel, "Beware of him, and obey his voice." He is constituted the King and Lawgiver of the

church, and whatever laws do not bear the stamp of his authority, and are touched with his royal sceptre, they should have no regard paid to them in the church of God. And as all the laws, so all the promises of God are in him, and in him they are "yea and amen;" they are just the articles of his latter will and testament. He is the marrow and substance of the whole revelation, and of all the truths of it, they meet in him as their centre; hence we read of "knowing the truth as it is in Jesus." And whatever doctrines or sermons do not hang upon and quadrate with this foundation God hath laid in Zion, are but hay and stubble that are to be burned; the sweetness of every truth lies in the connexion that it bears to him, and in its being a vehicle to convey the grace that is in Christ to our souls. So that, I say, this name of God is in Christ.

4. God's works are his name: Psal. viii. 1. David there, viewing the glory of God, as it is expressed in his works, cries, "How excellent is thy name in all the earth!" Now, this name of his is in Christ. Is his name the Creator of all things, that stretched out the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth? Why, this name of his is in Christ: John i. 3: "Without him was not any thing made that was made." Psal. xxxiii. 6: "By the word of the Lord," namely, of Christ, as the context clears, "were the heavens made: and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth." Is the name of God, the glorious Preserver and Governer of all things? Why, this name is in Christ: Heb. i. 3: "He upholdeth all things by the word of his power;" and Col. i. 16, 17, there we see both the works of creation and providence ascribed to him, "By him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him. And he is before all things, and by him all things consist."

5. God's name is his worship: Exod. xx. 24: "In all places where I record my name, there will I come unto you, and will bless you." This is a glory that he will not give to another; it is idolatry to make any thing or person in heaven or in earth the object of worship and adoration, but God alone, Is. xlii. 8, Matth. iv. 10. And therefore we find that when divine worship is offered to angels, they reject it as a thing not due to them, Rev. xix. 10, and xxii. 9. And when it was offered to Paul and Barnabas, they rejected it with horror and indignation, Acts xiv. 14, 15. But though this crown of glory, this name, the object of worship, cannot fit any created head, yet it suits the head of our Immanuel: John v. 23: "This is the will of him that sent me, that all men should honour the

Son, even as they honour the Father." Accordingly, the church, Psal. xlv., is commanded to adore him; "He is thy Lord; and worship thou him:" the powers of the earth are commanded to "kiss the Son (that is, to worship him) lest he be angry, and they perish from the way:" yea, all the angels in heaven are commanded to worship him, Heb. i. 6: "When he bringeth in his first-begotten into the world, he saith, Let all the angels of God worship him;" and, accordingly, we find all the ransomed in glory paying the tribute of worship to him equally with the eternal Father, Rev. v.: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing. Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever."

6. His perfections and excellencies are his name; and all these are really and originally in Christ, as they are in the Father. To instance in a few. God's *wisdom* is his name: "Wise in heart, and mighty in counsel." And this is in Christ: "Christ the wisdom of God: In him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." His *power* is his name: "The Lord God Almighty." This name is in Christ: "Christ the power of God; and, The Almighty," Rev. xix. Hence called "the arm of the Lord, and the man of God's right hand, whom he has made strong for himself." By the power of God in him, he "spoiled principalities and powers." The *holiness* of God is his name, frequently called "the holy One of Israel." And this attribute shines so brightly in our Immanuel, in the eyes of the angels, that they fall down with covered faces before his throne, crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts, the whole earth is full of his glory." The *justice* of God is his name: "The Lord is a rock; and his work is perfect; a God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." And this name of his is in Christ, in its greatest lustre: it shines more eminently in him than in all the torments of the damned in hell. Never did the justice of God appear in such a lustre, as when he cried, "Awake, O sword, against the man that is my fellow:" he has fulfilled the command, and borne the penalty of the law as our surety, and so has obtained that name of "Jesus Christ the righteous; and the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake." The *love* of God is his name; for *God is love*. But it is in Christ that he is so to sinners: John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life. The *mercy* of God is his name, Exod. xxxiv. 6. But it is through Christ that his mercy vents towards us sinners of Adam's family: hence, Cant v.: "his belly" or bowels are said to be as "bright

ivory overlaid with sapphires." His *grace* is his name, Exod. xxxiv. 6: "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious." But it is only through Christ that his grace reigns towards unworthy sinners, Rom. v., at the close; "That grace might reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." His name is "the Lord pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin." This name is in him, as you see in the context; and when he was here in a state of humiliation, he acted frequently as one that had power to forgive sin: "Go in peace, thy sins are forgiven thee." His name is his *truth*; "a God of truth, and without iniquity." Our Immanuel wears this name; hence called the truth itself, John xiv. 6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life; the Amen, the faithful and true Witness." I might tell you of many other names that are peculiar to God, every one of which is in Christ. His name is *the everlasting God*, Is. xl., at the close: "From everlasting to everlasting thou art God." You may see this name of God in Christ, Rev. i.: "The Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, which is, and which was, and which is to come." His name is the unchangeable God, without any "variableness, or shadow of turning." See this name in Christ, Heb. xiii. 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." His name is the omniscient God, that "searcheth the hearts, and trieth the reins." See this name in Christ, John ii., at the close, "He needs not that any should testify of man; for he knows what is in man." Rev. i.: "His eyes are as a flame of fire;" he searches the heart, and tries the reins, and knoweth all the works of the church. His name is "the God of salvation:" "Our God is the God of salvation." And this name is in Christ; hence, old Simeon, when he gets him in his arms, blesses God, and cries, "Now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." From all which, I think the truth of the doctrine abundantly evident, that the name of God is in Christ.

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to *give you some of the properties, or qualities, of the name of God as it is in Christ.*

1. Then, his name in Christ is a glorious name. His essential glory, instead of being darkened, is illuminated by being set in Christ, for Christ is "God manifested in the flesh;" plainly implying, that God out of Christ is an unknown God to sinners, but God in Christ is a God whose glory is manifested or displayed to our view. Never did the glory of God shine so as in Christ; hence he is called "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person." So that, I say, the name of God in Christ is a glorious name:

Psal. lxxii., at the close, "Now blessed be his glorious name; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." His name is the glory of the church militant, for "in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory;" and the glory of the church triumphant, for "the Lord God, and the Lamb, are the light" of the place.

2. This name that is in Christ is a transcendent and incomparable name, "a name above every name that can be named, whether in this world, or in that which is to come, Eph. i., at the close. His name is more excellent than the names of all the great powers of the earth; for "who among the sons of the mighty can be compared unto him?" This is one of his royal titles, "The Prince of the kings of the earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." His name transcends the name of the angels in heaven: Heb. i. 4: "Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

3. The name of God in Christ is a most powerful name. Such power or authority is in this name, that "every knee must bow, and every tongue must confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the praise and glory of his eternal Father," Phil. ii. 9—11. Such power or strength there is in this name, that devils were cast out, the dead were raised, the eyes of the blind, and the ears of the deaf, were opened, and all manner of diseases were healed by the power or virtue of this name, in the infancy of Christianity; as we read in the histories of the Acts of the Apostles. Such power is there in the name of a God in Christ, that when prayers and petitions are put up to heaven with this name upon them, they prevail and obtain any thing: "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, I will give it," John xiv. 13, 14; Mark vii. 26, &c.

4. His name in Christ is a most helpful and saving name: "Our help is in the name of the Lord, who made the heavens and the earth." If a poor soul can but, by the eye of faith, read the name of God in Christ, immediately he reads his own salvation in it: Is. xlv. 22: "Look unto me, and be ye saved:" Why, how comes this about? "For I am God, and there is none else." It takes every burden off the back to see this name in Christ; Psal. xxxiv. 5: "They looked unto him, and were lightened;" and no wonder, for whenever God's name is taken up as in Christ, it is seen to be "the God of peace." God in Christ is a "God reconciling the world to himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them."

5. His name in Christ is a wonderful and a secret name: "His name shall be called Wonderful;" and why wonderful, but because the "child born unto us," and the "son given

unto us," is called "The mighty God, The everlasting Father?" It is so wonderful and mysterious, that it is just a secret which the world cannot conceive aright of, and cannot frame to pronounce it: God in a crucified Christ is "to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness." And even they that have it manifested to them in a saving way, it is such a secret and wonderful name, that they are ready to cry with Agur, "What is his name, and what is his son's name, if thou canst tell?" Prov. xxx. 4.

6. His name in Christ is a sweet and a savoury name; it is like "ointment poured forth" to a poor soul that takes it up in a way of believing. And the reason of this is, because whenever a sinner is enabled to read the name of God in Christ, he sees him to be his own God: as we see in Thomas, whenever he took him up in a proper light, he immediately cries out, "My Lord, and my God:" according to that of Christ, "I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God."

7. It is a holy and reverend name: "Holy and reverend is his name:" and they that *know* it, will *sanctify* it in their hearts, and make him their *fear*, and their *dread*. So holy is this name, that it sanctifies the soul that knows it, and kills indwelling corruption; and no wonder, for "he finishes transgression, and makes an end of sin."

8. It is a dreadful and terrible name to all the devils, the wicked and unbelieving world. The devils fall a trembling at the name of a God in Christ; his work is to "bruise the head of the serpent, to spoil principalities and powers." And this name, however despised and rejected by the wicked now, yet the day comes, when, at the sight of him, they will cry to the rocks and mountains to cover them.

9. It is a durable and everlasting name: "His name shall endure for ever, his name shall last like the sun. As his name is "from everlasting," so it will be "to everlasting God." Thus you see some of the excellent properties and qualities of the name of God as it is in Christ.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

My name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

III. The *third* thing in the method was, to *inquire how is the name of God in Christ, or after what manner is his name in him?* There seems to be something of a peculiarity in the words. The power, wisdom, majesty, and greatness of God, is to be read in every work of his hands; thus, *His name is great through all the earth,* even among the heathen world: but never was it said of any creature in heaven or earth, angel or archangel, patriarch, prophet, apostle, or saint, as it is here said of Christ the Angel of the covenant, *My name is in him.* So that the name of God must be in Christ after another manner than in any other being. And therefore, for clearing this, I would have you to advert to the following particulars, which I take to be implied in the expression:—

1. *My name is in him,* that is, it is wholly in him. Some prints of my hand, some draughts of my power, wisdom, holiness, may be found in others; but they are wholly in him; the whole Deity or Godhead of the Father is in him; my whole essence and being, my whole power and wisdom, my whole holiness and justice, goodness and truth, my eternity and omniscience, are as much in him as in myself; hence we are told, that "in him dwells all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."

2. The name of God is solely in him, and in none other as it is in him, *My name is in him,* exclusively of all others. Hence we are told, that "there is no name given under heaven, or among men, whereby to be saved, but by the name of Jesus." And what is the reason of this? Because the name of God, namely, his saving helping name, is in him alone. "I am God, and there is none else;" and therefore, says he, "Look unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth," Is. xlv. 22.

3. My name is in him originally. Some orthodox divines, when speaking of the Trinity of persons in the glorious Godhead, are pleased to say, that the Father is the fountain of the Deity. I do not love that way of speaking; for I think the whole Deity, including the three persons, are their own

fountain and original; and the eternal generation of the Son, and procession of the Holy Ghost, are essential to the Deity; and that the whole Deity is originally in every one of these sacred and divine persons; and that it is inconsistent for any thing that is God, to be an inferior or independent being.

4. *My name is in him*, that is, in a most bright, express, and illustrious manner, Heb. i. 3. The image of God was impressed upon Adam in innocence, at his creation, and it is impressed upon all that are the children of God by regeneration and adoption; but Christ has not the image of God impressed, but he is "the express image of his Father, and the brightness of his glory," insomuch that it is impossible for a person, by the eye of faith, to behold the glory of the only begotten Son of God, and not at the same time to behold the glory of the Father also, for "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in the face (or person) of Jesus Christ."

5. The name of God is in him, as Mediator, in a way of donation and derivation. He has a delegated authority, a derived fulness as Mediator; for "it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" and "God hath given him to be head over all things to the church;" he hath appointed and anointed him to be "King in Zion;" and "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." What he doth as the great Prophet, Priest, and King, of his church, he doth in his Father's name, or by his warrant.

6. The name of God is in him in a way of manifestation: John xvii. 6: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world." And, oh sirs! till Christ teach us the knowledge of the name of God, we shall remain for ever ignorant of it: John i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."

7. The name of God is in him in a way of communication. And it is set in him as Mediator, that it may, by him, be given to, and set upon his people: Rev. iii. 12: "Him that overcometh, will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God; and I will write upon him my new name." And how is it that he writes the name of his God upon them, but by causing them to see and read the name or glory of God in himself? 2 Cor. iii., last; "All we, with open face, beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." And thus you see how the name of God is in Christ. But after all that we have said, this matter will remain an unknown mys-

tery, unless the Spirit of the Lord come, as a "Spirit of wisdom and revelation," and show us the mysteries of a God in Christ.

IV. The *fourth* thing in the method was, to *inquire into the reasons of this doctrine: why is it that the name of God is in Christ?*

Answ. 1. He bears his Father's name, because he and his Father are *one;* he is one God with his Father, the same in substance, equal in power and glory; and so it was impossible it could be otherwise.

2. Because he is his Father's Son, his only Son, his beloved Son, by eternal generation: "The Word was made flesh, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father." Who so fit to bear his Father's name, as his own *first-born*, whom he therefore hath "made higher than the kings of the earth?"

3. He only was able to bear the weight of that infinite and excellent name. If the name of God had been set in any created being, however excellent, as it would have been a lie to call that creature God; so the highest and most excellent angel, or archangel, would have sunk under the weight of it. The very thought of being equal with God, sunk millions of angels from the height of heaven to the bottom of hell: how then could any finite being have been able to bear it? So that if Christ had not been God himself, one God with the Father, he had sunk under the weight of that great name; but he was able to bear it, being his Father's equal, and therefore it was committed to him.

4. His name is *in him*, that it might be near unto us. Oh how near doth God come to us in the person of Christ! he comes and dwells with man upon earth, "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." God in Christ mingles natures with us in a personal union, and he mingles names with us in Christ; for his name is *Immanuel, God with us:* he mingles interests with us in Christ; he connects his own glory with our salvation; hence Christ is called, "The man of God's right hand, whom he makes strong for himself;" that is, strong for the great purposes of his own glory in our salvation. So that, I say, the name of God is in Christ, that his name might be connected with and near to us; and his wondrous works of grace through Christ, declare his great name to be near. And whenever the gospel is preached, and Christ the righteousness and salvation of God revealed to sinners, he is said to "bring near his righteousness," Is. xlvi., at the close.

5. He has put his name in Christ to break our enmity

against him, and to reconcile us to himself: "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." The great design of the manifestation of the name and nature of God in Christ, was to give such a convincing proof and demonstration of his love, mercy, and good-will toward man upon earth, as might for ever break our enmity, reconcile our hearts, and render himself an object of love, trust, hope, desire, delight, and confidence to man, whose heart was altogether alienated from God by sin, as if he were an implacable and inexorable enemy.

V. The *last* thing proposed in the prosecution of this doctrine, was the *Application.*

Use *first*, may be in a few *Inferences.* Is it so that the name of God is in Christ, after such a manner as you have heard? Then,

Inf. 1. See hence the injury that is done both to the Father, and the Son, by the abominable Arian heresy, that has been broached in our land, and which I fear is too much prevailing both among ministers and members of this established church. Why, that heresy does injury to the eternal Father, because it flatly contradicts his record concerning our Redeemer in my text. God the Father says, *My name*, which is the supreme, self-existent, and independent God, this name of mine *is in him.* This is false, says the Arians, for the name of the supreme independent, and self-existent God, is the personal property of the Father, and therefore not to be ascribed to the Son. And then it does injury to the Son, because it *denies* him to have "a name above every name." If his name be not the supreme God, there must needs be a name above his name. In short, a dependent or inferior God is no God at all; for there is no middle kind of being between the Creator and the creature.

Inf. 2. Is his Father's name in him? Then see hence, that God the Father is concerned in all the affronts and indignities done to Christ, and will surely resent them. Why, his Father's *name is in him*, and the indignities done to him, reflect upon his royal and eternal Father. Psal. cx. 1: "The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." He will cast them down, and tread them under his feet. I will tell you of two or three sorts of persons that are in danger of the resentment of God the Father, for indignities done to his eternal Son.

1*st*, All you that reject him by unbelief, and do not close with him as he is offered in the gospel, as a prophet for instruction, as a priest for justification, and as a king for sanctification. Oh! how many are there that fall under this

heavy charge! "Who hath believed our report?" Sirs, however light you may make of the sin of unbelief, yet remember there is something worse abiding you, than a dying without mercy: Heb. x. 28, 29: "If they that despised Moses' law, died without mercy, of how much sorer punishment shall he be thought worthy, who hath trodden under foot the Son of God," &c.

2*dly*, You that are doing injury to any of his sent servants and ambassadors that bear his name and commission, ye lie exposed to the resentment of the Father of Christ. "He that despiseth you, despiseth me, and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." The wrath of the Lord fell upon the Jews, till there was no remedy, for their mocking, abusing, and maltreating the Lord's messengers that he sent to them, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16.

3*dly*, You that do any injury to his poor people and members, and who oppress them either in their temporal or spiritual privileges, or yet offend or grieve them any manner of way, "it were better for such that a mill-stone were put about their necks, and they cast into the midst of the sea," than that they should "offend one of these little ones." Many a sad heart the Lord's poor people are getting at this day. The lambs of Christ's flock, and their precious liberties, are sacrificed by many shepherds in our Israel, to please and gratify the great ones of the land. More regard is shown to a patron, or a heritor, in the election of a minister, than to the flock or church of Christ, that "he hath purchased with his own blood." It is the wise, the mighty, the noble, the heritor and laird, that are called to vote in the election of a church-officer; quite contrary to Christ's way, who has said, "Not many wise men, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the poor, the weak things of the world, to confound the wise, that no flesh might glory."

4*thly*, You that are doing injury to his work and cause, and who are helping on the present course of defection from a covenanted work of reformation. Who sees not what bold strokes are given at "the carved work" of God's temple in this land; particularly, by a set of corrupt time-serving ministers, and others, who join hand with them in breaking down the necessary fences of the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of the church, in enacting laws inconsistent with the laws of Christ to the hurt, not to the edification, of his body; in suppressing the true friends, and supporting the open enemies of a covenanted reformation, scattering instead of gathering the lambs of Christ, in perverting the keys of discipline to the screening of the unworthy, and to the censuring of ministers for the faithful discharge of their duty?

No care taken to purge out the erroneous in principle, or scandalous in practice, but, on the contrary, vacant congregations crammed and filled up with corrupt men, without any regard to the voice of those who know the voice of the shepherd. I say, you who are helping on these or the like defections from a work of reformation, you are setting yourselves in opposition to the interests of Christ, who hath his Father's name in him, and you expose yourselves to the resentment of his Father and of his Anointed, (Psal. ii.) God and his Messiah hold you in *derision*, and when he has made use of you as tools to serve his own glorious designs, he will "break you as with a rod of iron, and dash you in pieces as a potter's vessel."

5thly, All you who stand by as Gallios, unconcerned spectators of the ruin of the church of Christ, while others are contending against the mighty for the preservation of the work of the Lord, among us; remember, that the vengeance of God's temple will fall upon you also, for there are no neutrals in the cause of Christ; they that are not for him, are against him. "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they come not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord, against the mighty." In short, all ye that are living in league with sin, either with public or personal sin, which Christ came to destroy, and to make an end of, ye are affronting him that has his Father's name in him, and counteracting the very design of his manifestation in the flesh, and therefore have reason to fear wrath lies at the door: every soul that will not hear him, and obey his voice, shall be destroyed from among the people, and that because his Father's name is in him.

Inf. 3. Hence, also, we may see noble ground for the courage and fortitude of faith, contending for Christ, his cause and interest, in "an evil day, a day of trouble and treading down, and perplexity, in the valley of vision." Let none of the hearts of the followers of the Lamb fail them because of the might or multitude of their enemies, either within them or without them; for although ye may have principalities and powers, spiritual wickednesses in high places," as well as "flesh and blood," to grapple with, and though his cause and interest may seem to be run down and ruined, yet do not desert him, or give up his cause as desperate and hopeless. Why, the Captain of your salvation has his Father's *name in him;* he is armed with his Father's power and authority, and the armies which are in heaven and in earth follow him; and it is his way of working and doing, to draw out the main body and strength of the enemy, and to give way to their wrath, till his cause seems to be desperate and

hopeless, and then to give the enemy a turn, that his power and wisdom may be the more visible in their overthrow, and in the delivery of his own people. He lets Pharaoh and his Egyptians go on in opposition to Israel, and in insulting Israel's God, for a considerable time, till the cry of Israel goes up to heaven, and then at length he trains Pharaoh and his army out to the Red Sea in pursuit of Israel, triumphing and rejoicing all the way, saying, "I will pursue, overtake, and divide the spoil;" and Israel at the same time brought to the last extremity; and then he steps in, and makes the Red sea a gibbet for the public execution of the enemy. "For this cause I have raised thee up, to show my power in thee, and that my name might be manifested," &c. Many such stratagems of war are with him; and therefore let no man's heart fail him, because of the power or multitude of Christ's enemies, or the lowness of his cause.

Inf. 4. See hence noble encouragement to all to confess and own Christ before the world, and to bear and wear his name on our foreheads before all the world; why, because his Father's *name is in him;* and, therefore, we need not be ashamed of him, or of his truths, his ways, his people, his prerogatives, his interest. His Father is not ashamed of him; his *name was in him*, even when hanging ignominiously upon the cross between two thieves: and therefore let not us be ashamed of him, even when he and his cause is run down by all about us. Sirs, no man was ever a loser by owning Christ or his interest. "He that confesses me before men, him will I confess before my Father, and before his angels." Perhaps you may lose your *houses* or *land;* yea, your very *lives*, in owning and confessing his name; but what the matter of all that? "He that loses his life," for this cause "shall find it." The very "reproach of Christ is greater riches" than all worldly treasures.

Inf. 5. See hence the dignity and excellency of a Redeemer's person, and why he is so precious and valuable in the eyes of all that know him, and look on him by the eye of faith: "To you that believe he is precious." Why, his Father's *name is in him;* his being, his glory, his will, his authority, and all his perfections are in him. No wonder though the church militant and triumphant cry, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain," &c. No wonder to hear the church crying, "Thou art fairer than the children of men, more glorious than all the mountains of prey." "My beloved is white and ruddy: his countenance is as Lebanon, excellent as the cedars: his mouth is most sweet; yea, he is altogether lovely." "Whom have we in heaven but thee? and there is none in all the earth that we desire beside thee."

I say, no wonder they make such ado about him, seeing they read his Father's name, yea, the "brightness of his glory" in him. Let the world say of Christ what they will, he will be valued by all that know him.

Inf. 6. See hence whence it was that the pleasure of the Lord prospered in the hand of our Redeemer, I mean, the great undertaking of man's redemption: although hell and earth, and the curse of a broken law, were against him, though the fiery mountains of his Father's wrath were in his way; yet he went on steadily in the undertaking, did not faint, nor was discouraged, till he could say, "It is finished." Why, the reason was, his Father's name was *in him*, the very power and perfections of God were *in him*. And therefore he could not but prosper. God the Father was not only bound by promise, but bound by honour to support his own name that was in him. To this purpose, see Psal. lxxxix. 20—24.

Inf. 7. See hence the prevalency of Christ's intercession for his people in heaven, and whence it is that the prayers of the saints, that are sent up in the name of Christ, pass through before the throne of God; why, the name of God is in our "Advocate with the Father," and therefore he cannot but prevail. God the Father sees his own name in him; and when he reads his own name in him, he can deny him nothing, and can deny nothing that is asked in his name. It is a strange way of speaking that Christ has to his disciples, when he is encouraging them to the duty of prayer, John xiv. 13, 14: "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do it:" plainly intimating, that the name of the Father is glorified in the Son, when we pray in his name, and when these prayers that are put up in his name, are granted and answered. Set the name of Christ before you when you go to God in prayer, set it in the front of all your petitions and addresses, and they will surely get a hearing, and prevail; for Christ will own and present these petitions that come up in his name to the Father, and the Father will not reject the intercession of Christ in our behalf, because his *name is in him.*

Inf. 8. See hence what honourable and excellent persons the saints of God are, however little they may be valued by a wicked and blind world; why, as the Father's name is in Christ, so Christ's name is in them, and consequently the name of God is in them: Rev. iii. 12: "I will write upon them the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God: and I will write upon them my new name, that no man knows, but he that receives it." So that I say, the saints

must be very excellent persons: yea, the "excellent ones of the earth," "more excellent than their neighbours," because they have the name of Christ, and the name of the Father of Christ in and upon them. Indeed the world cannot read this name of God that is on the saints, and therefore they despise them, and account them as the "dross and off-scourings of the earth," and perhaps prefer "the man with the gold ring and the gay clothing" to them; and many times the saints cannot see it themselves; but the day comes, when all the dust and rubbish by which this name that is upon them is obscured, shall be wiped off, and men and angels shall read it on them in legible characters: 1 John iii. 2: "Beloved, now we are the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know, that when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."

Inf. 9. See hence how faith goes to work in laying claim to God, as our own God in Christ. Why, here it is: ***My name*** or nature ***is in him***, says God: Well, says faith, my name and nature is in him too; and therefore God and I are met together in sweet peace, amity, and friendship. Oh, the encouragement of faith in God that lies in that sweet name, "Emmanuel, God-man, or God with us!" Oh! says the Father, I trust him, for my nature is in him: Oh! says the believer, my nature is met with the nature of God in him, and therefore I too will trust him. My fulness, "all the fulness of the Godhead," is in him, says the Father: And my stock, my all, is in him, says the believer. My life is in him, says God: And my life is in him, too, says the believer. "Our life is hid with Christ in God." My glory is in him, says the Father: And he is my glory too, says the believer, "In him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." Oh, the sweet meeting and centring between God and the believing soul in Christ! Oh, sirs! wonder and admire at this meeting, that our name is met with the name of God in Christ: here is a brighter crown of glory put upon our head, than ever shone upon the head of Adam in innocence: yea, the highest angel or archangel has not such a title of affinity to the name of God, as the meanest member of Christ upon the earth.

Inf. 10. See hence what good reason to record his name, by preaching the gospel, and administering the sacraments of his institution, and why every gracious soul loves so much to hear of the name of Christ, and to speak of it; why, it is no wonder they that know him flock and resort to these ordinances where his name is recorded; no wonder though ministers and Christians study to cause his name to be remembered in all generations; why, his Father's name is in him, and there-

fore they cry, "Let his name endure for ever, and let his name last like the sun, for men shall be blessed in him, and all generations shall call him blessed."

Inf. 11. This doctrine may serve as a mythe or directory both to ministers and people, how to steer an even and steady course in this dark, divided, and cloudy day, when some are saying, *Lo, he is here,* and others, *Lo, he is there;* some saying, *This is the way,* others, *That is the way;* some saying, These men should come into the church, and join her judicatures, others crying, No, it is duty to continue in a secession. This doctrine serves to show what we are to do in such a distracted day; why, we are neither to regard the cries on the one side or the other, but to look to him who has his Father's name in him, who has the Urim and Thummim in his breast, and to follow him: "Behold I have given him for a witness to the people, a leader and commander to the people;" and therefore let the people follow their leader. The great inquiry at this day should be, Where stands the standard-bearer among ten thousands? where stands the name of God, and testimony of Jesus? for where that stands there we are to stand. If judicatories be holding the reformation-standard of Christ, we are to hold with them; but if they be pulling down the reformation-standard, we are to stand off from them, as we would not partake of their plagues.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

My name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE THIRD SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

Use *second* may be of *Trial.* What knowledge or acquaintance have you of him that has his Father's name in him? Has he, either at this occasion, or formerly, manifested his own and his Father's name to you, as he speaks in that forecited John xvii. 6: "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world?" Take the following marks, by which you may know this.

1. If so, then his name will have a sweet savour and relish in your very souls, so that you will *eat* it, and it will be to you "the joy and rejoicing of your hearts: Because of the savour of thy good ointments, thy name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love thee." Oh sirs! how goes the

name of Christ away with you? You that are contented with dry sapless harangues of morality, and the airy flourishes of human rhetoric, pleased with sermons in which scarcely any thing of the name of Christ is to be found; you never yet had his name or his Father's name manifested to you, you are strangers to it; for to them that know his name, that sermon, that ordinance, that communion, where the name of Christ is not recorded with honour, it is unsavoury, to them tasteless like the white of an egg, in which there is no relish.

2. You will frequently think on his name with pleasure, and roll it as a sweet morsel under your tongue. Oh! says David, "My meditations of him are sweet, and I will be glad in the Lord: When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the night-watches, my soul shall be satisfied as with marrow and with fatness." It is given as a character of the saints, especially in an evil day, that "they feared the Lord, and thought upon his name," Mal. iii. 16, and Is. xxvi. 8: "In the way of thy judgments, O Lord, have we waited for thee; the desire of our soul is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee."

3. You will be often speaking to the commendation of his name, and of his Father's name that is in him. Oh! will the soul say, that I had a tongue like a trumpet, that could sound through all the corners of the universe, to proclaim the glory and excellency of his name; "Now blessed be his glorious name for ever and ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." And you will be ready sometimes to call in the whole powers of your soul to "bless his holy name," and to summon "angels that excel in strength, and all his ministers that do his pleasure, and all his works in all places of his dominions," to help you to celebrate the glory of his worthy name.

4. If you be acquainted with the name of God as it is in Christ, you will make much use of that name in all your addresses to God, and you will lay the only stress of your acceptance upon that name; when you offer up either prayers or praises to God, you will set the name of Christ before you, and the name of God in him, as that which will bear you through, and render you accepted; Eph. i. 6: "He hath made us accepted in the Beloved." Heb. x. 19—22; you see there that it is in the name of our great New Testament high priest, that we are to draw near with full assurance of faith." See Heb. iv. at the close. Now, try yourselves by this, whether you be acquainted with the name of God in Christ; when you go about any duty, whether it be praying, praising, communicating, or whatever it be, you will do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, to the glory of God through him.

5. If you be acquainted with the name of God as it is in Christ, you will be ready to bow at or in the name of Jesus, and you will put equal honour upon him as upon his Father: "For this is the will of him that sent him, that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father; and to him every knee must bow, and every tongue shall confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Sirs, you entertain mistaken notions of the Deity, if you think that it is a slight put upon the Father, to give the same divine worship and homage to him as to the Father, for God the Father is glad when every knee bows to Christ. And therefore try yourselves by this. God the Father says, "Kiss the Son; hear him: He is thy Lord, and worship thou him." Now, do you obey this command, do you trust in his name, do you glory in his name, and obey and honour the name of God in him.

6. You will be very tender of his name, you will "*sanctify* it in your hearts, and make it your *fear* and your *dread*;" you will be tender of his honour, when you hear his name profaned, Psal. xlii. 10: "It is as a sword within my bones, while they say daily unto me, Where is thy God?" tender of his laws, afraid of sin yourselves, and grieved when you see his laws broken by others; tender of his Spirit, afraid of grieving him; tender of his members and ministers that have his name upon them; tender of his house, and the concerns of it will be dearer to you than the concerns of your own houses; "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up," says David; more concerned to see these thieves and robbers spoiling the house of God, than if you saw your own house rifled before your eyes.

Use *third* of this doctrine shall be of *Exhortation* to all in general, both to saints and sinners, both to communicants and others, in a few particulars. Is it so as you have been hearing, that the name of God is in Christ, in such a way and manner as has been explained? Then,

First, See that you study to know the name of God in him. The knowledge of God in the works of creation and providence, is the foundation of all natural religion; and the knowledge of the name and nature of God in Christ, is the foundation of the Christian religion: and therefore we find that commonly in Scripture, the knowledge of God and of his name, as it is revealed in Christ, is put for all religion, John xvii. 3: "This is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." 2 Cor. iv. 6: "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined into our hearts, to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ." And, there-

fore, sirs, I would commend it to you above all things, to know this name of God, as is revealed in Christ. *Motive,* It is revealed in him on purpose that it may be known by the children of men. God in Christ is just God "manifested, and manifested in the flesh;" and why is a thing manifested, but that it may be known? the manifestation of it is vain, and to no purpose, except the knowledge of it be attained. Shall God manifest himself to us in Christ, and shall not we pursue the knowledge of him as he is in Christ? It is the first commandment of the law, to know the name of God as it is in Christ, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me," that is, thou shalt know and acknowledge me, as I have revealed myself in the person of my eternal Son. And till you obey this commandment, and know this name of God in Christ, you can obey no commandment of the law to purpose; and when you obey this one, you will surely obey all the commandments; when you come once to know God as he is in Christ, you shall know him as your own God, and so come at a saving interest in him. When he is taken up as the God and Father of Christ, we take him up as our own God, and our own Father in Christ, and are enabled to cry with Thomas, "My Lord, and my God;" agreeably to what Christ declares before he left this lower world, "I ascend to my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." If you come not at the knowledge of the name of God as it is in Christ, you shall know his name, as it is out of Christ, through all eternity. And oh, how terrible is his absolute name! It is as "a consuming fire to the workers of iniquity." And, therefore, for the Lord's sake, seek to know the name of God as it is in Christ, the great Angel of the covenant.

Direct. 1. If you would know the name of God, as it is in Christ, search for it "in the volume of his book," for there it is revealed. Take heed to the word read and preached, "as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts." As a man's name and character is known by his testimonial, so Christ's name and character is to be known by the word, "for these are they that testify of him;" and therefore "search the scriptures" for his name, dig for it there as for a hidden treasure.

2. Attend carefully upon the ordinances of his appointment, where you may have them dispensed in purity, by those that bear Christ's commission; for there it is that his name and his Father's name is recorded. As it is said of Paul, so it may be said of every faithful minister of Christ, "He bears the name of Christ unto the Gentiles;" and the work of ministers, particularly in the dispensation of word

and sacrament, is just to blazon his worthy name, and to cause it to be remembered: many a sweet view of the name of Christ have the Lord's people got in the dispensation of the word, "it is Christ whom we preach," and there the saints do "behold the beauty of the Lord."

3. Haunt the company of those that know his name, for they are very ready to tell it to others. The woman of Samaria, John iv., whenever she read the name of God in Christ, she runs to her neighbours, and tells it to them, saying, "Come see a man that has told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" Many a poor soul has been brought to Christ by hearing of his name among those that knew him. The daughters of Jerusalem hear the spouse speaking of the glory and beauty of her beloved, which makes them, Cant. vi. 1, to say, "Whither is thy beloved gone, O thou fairest among women? that we may seek him with thee."

4. With all these join earnest prayer to God, who has set his name in Christ, that he may show this name, even his own glory, in the face of Jesus Christ, to you. Oh! plead the promise of the Spirit to testify of Christ, to take the glory of Christ, and show it to you; for it is a particular office of the Spirit, as a "Spirit of wisdom and revelation, to open the blind eyes," and to cause the soul to read the name of the Father in the Son, and he has promised his Spirit to them that ask him.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

My name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE FOURTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

Secondly, another word of exhortation is to you that know his name, to trust in it: Psal. ix. 10: "They that know thy name will put their trust in thee." How often are we exhorted in scripture to trust in the name of the Lord! Is. l. 10: "They that fear the Lord, and obey the voice of his servant; let them trust in the name of the Lord, and stay themselves upon their God." Oh, sirs! is his Father's name in him? then trust him and give him credit. It is promised, that "in

his name shall the Gentiles trust; that the Gentiles shall come unto his light, and kings to the brightness of his rising; to him shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." Seeing God the Father has set him forth unto you Gentiles in a gospel-dispensation, saying, *My name is in him*, Oh! "trust in this name of the Lord, and stay upon him as your God."

This trusting in his name, implies,

1. The knowledge of his name, for it is only *they who know his name* that *will put their trust in him.*

2. A persuasion of his authority and commission as the sent of God: for he glorified not himself to be made a high priest; but he that said unto him, thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." Christ did not run before he was called: "I the Lord have called thee, I will hold thine hand, and will help thee." Now, faith receives Christ upon his Father's credit, upon the record of God concerning him, as his great ordinance for salvation; and this is a part of his Father's name here intended.

3. It has in it a persuasion of his power and ability to save, because his Father's name is in him. "I have laid help upon one that is mighty: He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him."

4. This trusting in his name, has in it a renouncing of all other refuges but the name of the Lord as in him. The soul, in trusting in his name, cries, "Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the works of our hands, Ye are our gods. In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, or the multitude of mountains," &c.

5. It has in it an expectation of help and relief in this name: "Our help is in the name of the Lord," in the name of a God in Christ, "who made the heavens and the earth." When we trust a man of honesty and fidelity, we expect that he will not betray us, but that he will do to us according to his promise.

6. A persuasion that he will do to the soul in particular according to his gracious word, and that for the sake of his name, faithfulness and truth. Oh! says the soul, this word of his, which is "yea and amen in him," is "the ground of my sure hope," and in it "I will be confident;" for "he is not man that he should lie, or the son of man that he should repent." Thus you see what it is to trust in his name.

Quest. For what would you have us to trust in his name?

Answ. 1. Trust him with the government of the world in this dark and cloudy day, in which the nations are shaking

and staggering like a drunken man; for his Father has lodged the reins of the world's government in his hand: and if his Father has committed that trust to him, you have no reason to fear, though heaven and earth were mingling; for all power in heaven and earth being in his hand, he will bring all to good account.

2. Trust him with the government of his church, for "he rules in Jacob, he is King in Zion;" by his Father's appointment, "the government is upon his shoulders." His Father has hung upon him all the glory of his house, as upon a "nail fastened in a sure place." The offspring and the issue hang upon him; the vessels of the smallest quantity, even from the vessels of cups, to the vessels of flagons. The servants of the house may misplace the vessels, disorder the house; but no fear, he will bring all to rights in his own time and way; though before he do this he may come in such an awful manner as to make all the house to tremble; yet trust him, for "he is faithful in all his house;" he has founded it upon a rock, and "the gates of hell shall not prevail," so as to destroy it.

3. Trust him with all your temporal cares and concerns. Perhaps you are ready to be filled with anxiety of mind in the present posture of affairs, and to say, Oh! what shall come of me and mine, if the Lord shall, for the sins of these lands, order the bloody sword that is raging abroad, to pass over and visit us? Why, trust him even in that case: "For this man shall be the peace when the Assyrian shall come into our land." This man shall be "a hiding-place from the storm, a covert from the tempest, and as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." The name of God in him is "a strong tower; the righteous fly into it, and are safe." Oh! sirs, trust him for your provision and protection, for he has said his people shall "dwell on high, the place of their defence shall be the munitions of rocks; your bread shall be given you, and your water shall be sure." Psal. xxxvii. 3: "Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

4. Trust him for all your spiritual and eternal concerns, for all that he is "made of God unto us; for he received gifts for men," and he will not betray his trust. More particularly,

1*st*, Trust him for wisdom and counsel in every difficult case; trust him for instruction in the knowledge of the great mysteries of the kingdom, and secrets of the covenant. "He opens the book, and looses the seven seals thereof." When you come into dark paths, where you know not your way, trust him that he will lead the blind in the way they know

not, for he is "given for a leader and a commander to the people."

2*dly*, Trust him for peace and reconciliation, and for acceptance to your person and services through his everlasting righteousness; for "he hath brought in everlasting righteousness, he has magnified the law, and made it honourable, and the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake."

3*dly*, Trust him for a supply of all your wants, supplies of light, supplies of life, supplies of strength and grace; for "all we out of his fulness do receive grace for grace; and when the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and when their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Jacob will not reject them."

4*thly*, Trust him for freedom from the temptations and fiery darts of the devil, for his Father's name is in him, which is the terror of hell, he has "spoiled principalities and powers," and has said, that "the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly."

5*thly*, Trust him for a safe through-bearing at death, for "he was dead, and is alive, and lives for evermore, and hath the keys of hell and death;" and he has said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them from death."

Thus, I say, seeing his Father's name is in him, let him be the object of your trust in every case. And, to encourage your trust in him, consider,

1. That it is for this end that his Father's name is in him as Mediator, that he may be the object of your trust. Oh sirs! God had been an eternal object of terror instead of trust, if he had not manifested himself to us in Christ as "the Lord God merciful and gracious," &c.

2. That it is the design of the whole scriptures, and of the whole of a gospel-dispensation, to bring sinners to trust him, and saints to trust him better and more firmly: John xx. at the close, "These things are written, that ye might believe in the Son of God, and believing," or trusting, "ye might have life through his name."

3. It is the command of God that you trust in his name. It is not a thing optional, whether you do it or not as you please: no, you are concluded under the command of God to make him the object of your trust, even for your eternal salvation, 1 John iii. 23: "This is his commandment, that ye believe in the name of the only begotten Son of God," &c. And remember that this commandment is fenced with an awful penalty, that if you do it not, you are "condemned already," &c.

4. Consider, that he himself, as well as his Father, requires

your trust and confidence in his name: Is. xlv. 22: "Look unto me," or trust in me, "all ye ends of the earth;" for my Father's name is in me, "I am God, and there is none else." And oh! when a sinner trusts him, he is well pleased, for "he taketh pleasure in them that fear him, in those that hope in his mercy," &c.

5. Consider the advantage that shall accrue to you by trusting him that has his Father's name in him.

1*st*, Stability in a shaking and trying day. When many on every side of you are carried away with the wind of error, temptation, affliction, reproach, and persecution; yet by trusting in his name, ye shall be "as mount Zion, which cannot be removed for ever:" your faith and hope, like an "anchor sure and steadfast, entering within the veil," will keep you firm in all storms that may blow, either from heaven, earth, or hell.

2*dly*, You shall have the advantage of much inward peace when the world is reeling about you: "He shall not be afraid of evil tidings: his heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord." Is. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee."

3*dly*, Not only peace, but joy, is the fruit of trusting in this name which is set in Christ: "I have trusted in thy mercy, I have rejoiced in thy salvation. In whom, though now we see him not, yet believing, we rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory."

4*thly*, You shall be kept alive in famine, if you trust in this name. Sirs, there is "a famine of the word of the Lord" in many corners of this land, many of the Lord's remnant put sore to it for want of their ordinary meals; set a wandering for the bread of life through violent intrusions, and otherwise: Well, in this case look to, and trust in the name of a God in Christ, and ye "shall not want;" he will lead you to the place where he "causes his flocks to rest at noon." See a sweet promise to this purpose, Jer. xvii. 7, 8; Psal. xxxvii. 2.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

My name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE FIFTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I PROCEED now to the *third* word of exhortation from the text and doctrine. Is it so that the name of God is in our glorious Redeemer Jesus Christ? Oh then, sirs, let us glory in his name, for "in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory," Is. xlv. 25. It is with a view to this manifestation that it is said, Is. lx. 18: "The Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." And therefore let us read the name of God as our God in Christ, and rejoice and glory in it, whatever melancholy scenes may open in this lower world, whatever jars, and wars, whatever divisions or disasters; "Though mountains should be removed, and cast into the midst of the sea, though the waves may lift up their voice and make a mighty noise;" though sword, famine, and pestilence, should travel through the land, and lay it desolate of inhabitants; yet here is "a river, the streams whereof make glad the city of God." The name of God is in Christ, and his name in him is "a God reconciling the world unto himself; not imputing their trespasses unto them;" or, which is all one, his name in Christ is that which he proclaimed to Moses, "The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin;" and therefore let us rejoice in his name all the day long, Psal. lxxxix. 16, or, as it is Psal. cv. 3: "Glory ye in his holy name." And, that I may illustrate and clear this exhortation, which we find so much urged in the scriptures of truth, I shall,

1. Tell you what is implied in this rejoicing or glorying in his name,

2. Show what there is in his name that may afford matter of joy and glorying.

3. The proper seasons of this duty, or when it is especially that we are called to glory in his name.

4. Answer a few objections, or remove some difficulties that lie in the way, and which mar your joy in this name.

5. Offer a few advices how this duty is to be managed.

The *first* thing is to show, what it is to rejoice and glory in the name of God, as it is displayed and manifested to us in Christ; or what it supposes and implies.

1. Then, It supposes that the great name of God is manifested to us in Christ, as matter of joy and glorying. Hence no sooner was God actually incarnate, but immediately the angels (Luke ii.) proclaim it as a matter of triumph to the shepherds: "Behold, we bring you glad tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." Oh sirs! what matter of joy was it to our first parents when the name of an incarnate God was displayed to them, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent!" This name immediately dispelled the dismal cloud of wrath that was hovering over their heads, and cleared the sky to them, and all their posterity. And commonly the prophets under the Old Testament, when they begin to speak of the coming of the Messias, and of the manifestations of the name of God in him under the New Testament, they call and invite the church to rejoice at the prospect of it; Zech. ix. 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation." Is. lxii. 11: "Behold, the Lord hath proclaimed unto the end of the world, say ye to the daughter of Zion, Behold thy salvation cometh; behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him."

2. It supposes an uptaking of the name of God as it is manifested in Christ, and an impression or stamp of it made upon the soul by the Holy Spirit; "The light of the knowledge of the glory of God, in the face of Jesus Christ, shines in upon the heart and the soul, by beholding the glory of it as through a glass, is changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord." Sirs, the name of a God in Christ is manifested, externally, to you all; but, alas! few do really glory in his name. Why, what is the reason of it? The reason is, this name was never imprinted upon their hearts by the finger of the Spirit; they never read it by the eye of faith; "the god of this world blindeth the minds of them that believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine into them." So that, if ever you glory in this name, Christ, and the name of God in him, must be impressed upon your hearts, as Paul says of himself, "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me."

3. It has in it a high estimate and valuation of this "worthy name;" for men do not glory in a thing which they make but little account of. Oh, the superlative estimate that the believer, the gracious soul, puts upon the name of Christ, or the name of God in him! he looks on it as "a name above every name." "Yea, doubtless," says Paul, Phil. iii., "I

count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

4. It has in it a holy vaunting, boasting, and exultation of the soul in him: Psal. xxxiv. 2: "My soul," says David, "shall make her boast of God: the humble shall hear thereof, and be glad." Psal. xliv. 8: "In God we boast all the day long: and praise thy name for ever. Selah." The man dare not boast of his riches, of his honour, of his strength, of his righteousness, of his works, of his grace, experience, attainments, holiness, and obedience, or any thing else; but his soul will boast in a God in Christ, saying with Israel, Deut. xxxii.: "Their rock is not as our Rock, our enemies themselves being judges:" or David, Psal. xviii.: "Who is God, save the Lord? or who is a rock, save our God?" who in Christ is "God merciful and gracious." How often do we find Paul thus vaunting and making his boast in an incarnate God, and his doing and dying, "God forbid that I should glory in any thing, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world!" Oh! says he, "in this name will I glory: I can do all things through Christ strengthening me."

5. It has in it an earnest desire to have his glory raised, and the renown of this great name (if possible) spread through all the earth: Oh! says the soul, under this exercise, "Let his name endure for ever, let his name last like the sun: Blessed be his glorious name for ever and ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory." Thus you see what it is to rejoice and glory in the name of God as it is in Christ.

The *second* thing in this use, is to show what there is in this name of God in Christ, that affords such matter of joy and glorying? I answer, There is every thing in this name that can afford relief to a sinner, or matter of joy and triumph to a rational soul; for,

1. There is light in this name; he is "the Sun of righteousness, the light of the world, the day-spring from on high." Whenever he is revealed to a land, by the dispensation of the gospel, light arises there: "The people which sat in darkness, saw great light: and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death, light springs up," Matth. iv. 16. And whenever his name is savingly manifested to a soul, there is a divine light diffused through all the nooks and corners of the heart, insomuch that the man that moment is "called out of darkness into God's marvellous light;" and truly this "light is sweet, and it is a pleasant thing for the eyes to behold the sun." Oh, sirs! cry, cry, that his name may be manifested to you, so as it is not manifested to the world, and let your cries to heaven be accompanied with a

diligent attendance on his word read and preached, "as unto a light shining in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day-star arise in your hearts; and wait for it, as they that wait for the morning, I say, more than they that wait for the morning; for whenever this name is displayed in its glory to the soul, it will make your heart to rejoice with the light that is in it; then "the time of the singing of birds is come."

2. There is life in this name, and this affords matter of joy and glorying in it: John i. 4: "In him was life, and the life was the light of men." Yea, this is one of his famous titles, "the resurrection and the life, the way, the truth, and the life:" "This is the record of God, that God hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son," 1 John v. 11; and (in the last verse of the chapter save one,) "We are in him that is true, even in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life; and he that hath the Son, hath life." The name of God as in Christ, it works wonders among the dead; let but this name be manifested to a poor soul "dead in trespasses and sins," immediately it is quickened, "the spirit of life" enters into it. Oh, sirs, how comes it about that there lie such a multitude of dead souls like "dry bones in the valley of vision," notwithstanding of a clear dispensation of the gospel? Why, the matter is, though the name of Christ, and of God in him, be externally manifested or revealed, yet they never to this day took up the name of God in the light of the Spirit, or by faith of the Spirit's operation; and therefore it is, that they that are dead remain dead still, and they that are filthy remain filthy still. But though the unbelieving ignorant world should never know this name, yet there is life in it to them that know it; a life of justification to the soul that is condemned by the law; a life of sanctification to them that are perishing under the power and pollution of sin; a life of consolation to them who, through pressures of divine terrors, are laid in the lowest pit, in darkness, and in the deeps; a life of eternal glory to them that should have died "the second death," and been "punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and the glory of his power.

3. There is peace in the name of Christ, and of God in him. God in Christ is a "God of peace," committing to us a word of reconciliation; hence one of the famous titles of Christ is "The Prince of Peace:" he is our peace with God, for he "makes peace by the blood of his cross: When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." He makes peace with conscience, by sprinkling his blood upon it; let but the name of Christ be manifested to a soul distracted with the terrors of a guilty conscience, im-

mediately the storm is hushed into a pleasant calm. And by the manifestation of this name, peace is made up between man and man. The name of Christ, displayed in its power, makes the "wolf to dwell with the lamb, and the leopard to dwell peaceably with the kid. What is it that creates such divisions among us at this day? the church is rent, the state is rent, judicatories are rent, congregations are rent, families are rent, the hearts of ministers rent from their people, and the hearts of the people rent from their ministers, town councils and corporations rent, and run into different parties: why, the name and glory of a God in Christ, which is the centre of peace and love, is departed; little of Christ, or of his cause and interest, is before our eyes, "every one minding his own things, but few the things of Christ:" and I despair ever to see either our church or state divisions settled, till the name and glory of Christ, and his cause and interest, come to be greater in our eyes, than any private views or interests of our own.

4. Redemption and remission of sin is in his name; hence called "the Redeemer:" Is. lix. 20: "The Redeemer shall come to Zion." We are said to "have redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sin." He is "the Lord, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin." Whenever he manifests his name savingly to a poor soul, crying, "Mine iniquities are gone over my head, as a burden too heavy for me to bear;" the poor soul can read pardon of its sin, and sing with David, Psal. ciii.: "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Who pardons all thine iniquities; and who redeems thy life from destruction."

5. There is not only remission of sin, but a law-magnifying and justifying righteousness in his name: Jer. xxiii. 6: "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell in safety: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness.*" And, oh! whenever this name of his is read with the application of faith, saying, as Is. xlv. 24, "In the Lord have I righteousness;" the man begins to rejoice and glory in his name, saying, as Is. lxi. 10, "He hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and covered me with the robe of righteousness." The poor condemned sinner, that was trembling before the bar of his own conscience, begins to lift up his head, and say, "Who can lay any thing to my charge? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth?" Christ is the end of the law, and through him the righteousness of the law is fulfilled; for "he was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

6. Health or healing is in his name: Exod. xv. 26: "I am the Lord that healeth thee, JEHOVAH-ROPHI." Mal. iv. 2: "Unto you that fear my name, shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings." By this name "the eyes of the blind were opened, the ears of the deaf unstopped, the lame man made to leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb to sing." Let this name be but whispered into the heart by the Spirit, or let it be but called upon by faith in prayer, it will make the bones that were broken to rejoice. All soul maladies and diseases vanish before it. "He sent forth his word," which is in his name, "and healed them."

7. There is shelter in a stormy day in his name: "The name of the Lord is a strong tower." When storms and tempests are blowing, the believer, when he gets this name over his head, can sing and say, "In the floods of great waters, they shall not come near unto me, for the Lord is my refuge, and my strength, and a very present help in time of trouble; therefore I will not be afraid," Psal. xlvi. This name is the "strength of the poor, and the strength of the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall. I will lay me down in peace, and sleep, for thou, Lord, makest me to dwell in safety. I will not be afraid of ten thousands of the people, who set themselves against me round about."

8. There is honour and preferment in his name: Psal. xci. 14: "I will set him on high, because he hath known my name." Whenever this name is manifested to a soul, it gets "a name and a place within God's house, better than of sons and daughters among men;" and hence it is, that the "righteous is more excellent than his neighbour: Ever since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable," Is. xliii. 4: In a word, not to multiply particulars here, salvation is in the name of our God in Christ: "Our God is the God of salvation; and unto God the Lord do belong the issues from death." And whenever a poor soul by faith reads the name of God in Christ, it is capable to read its own salvation; and to sing, as Is. xii. 2, 3, "Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid; for the Lord JEHOVAH is my strength and my song, he also is become my salvation. And therefore with joy will I draw water out of the wells of salvation. Thus you see what matter of joy and glorying there is in the name of God as it is displayed in Christ; and therefore let us rejoice in this name, and glory in it all the day long.

The *third* thing in this use, was to tell you of the proper seasons of glorying and triumphing in this name that our Immanuel bears. *Answ.* We should glory in this name "all the

day long: While I have a being, I will bless the name of the Lord," says David. "Thanks be unto God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ." I will only specify two or three particular seasons proper for it.

1. Whenever we draw near to God in any duty of worship, we should set it before us, and glory in it as the foundation of our acceptance in his presence. When you go to prayer, or praise, or to read or hear the word; "whatsoever ye do, either in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus;" go about the duty glorying in this name, and it will make you and your duties accepted, and you to rejoice to work righteousness, and to remember the Lord in his ways, saying with David, Psal. xliii. 4, "I will go unto the altar of God, unto God my exceeding joy."

2. When you go about duty wanting a frame; for it is not your frame, but his name that must bear you through before God. Or when you have obtained to any thing of a frame or enlargement, or got duty comfortably discharged, then is a proper season for glorying in this name; for the wicked legal heart is then ready to "sacrifice unto its own net, and to burn incense unto its own drag." Let us learn to say, when we have reached our highest frames or enlargements, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto thy name be the glory," "Not I, but the grace of God in me."

3. When his name is slighted and disparaged by a blind world round about you, then is a proper season for glorying in this name. When the daughters of Jerusalem are expressing themselves slightly concerning Christ, saying, "What is thy beloved more than another beloved?" Cant. v. 9, this quickens the spouse's zeal for his glory and honour, and makes her run out in his commendation; and when she is done, she concludes with a holy boasting of him whom they disparaged, saying, "This is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem."

4. When you are damped through the prevalency of indwelling sin, then glory in this name: so did Paul, Rom. vii. 24, he is crying, "Wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of sin and death!" but immediately he views the name of a reconciled God in Christ, and then he gets up his heart, and cries, "I thank God through Jesus Christ: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." And so he goes on triumphing in this name through the whole of the 8th chapter.

5. When you are pressed by the temptations and fiery darts of Satan, then glory and rejoice in this name; for if in the name of a God in Christ you set up your banner against the

devil, he will fly before you; he is not able to hear tell of the seed of the woman that bruised his head.

6. When you are surrounded with the dark and black clouds of desertion, then study to glory and rejoice in the name of a reconciled God in Christ. When we walk in darkness, and see no light, we are to trust, and rejoice, and glory in the name of the Lord, and stay ourselves upon him as our God; this will fill us with "joy unspeakable and full of glory;" and no wonder; for when by faith the soul reads this name, it cannot miss to read a reconciled God in it.

7. Glory in this name, even in the face of death, and of an awful tribunal. Oh sirs! this name will bear you through death, for by it death is destroyed, and the grave vanquished. Set the name of Christ before you, and Jordan will divide, and the way to the land of promise will be patent and open: carry this name with you in before a tribunal, and you shall meet a friend upon the bench, who will say to you, "Come, thou blessed, and inherit the kingdom prepared for thee from the foundation of the world." Thus you see some seasons when we are to glory in this name.

The *fourth* thing upon this use, was to obviate some objections, or remove some difficulties that lie in the way of this duty, of glorying in the name of God as it is manifested in Christ.

Object. 1. You bid me rejoice and glory in the name of a God in Christ; but alas! how can this be, for the name of God is just my terror, "When I remember God, I am troubled?" I answer, I own indeed his law name, or his absolute name, is enough to terrify the strongest believer, or the saint of the highest magnitude, while any thing either of the guilt or filth of sin, hangs about him: but it is absolutely impossible that his name in Christ can be a terror, but rather a comfort to any sinner on this side of hell. Can the name "merciful or gracious," can the name, "Lord pardoning iniquity, the God of salvation," be a terror? No, it cannot be. So that when thou sayest thou art troubled at the remembrance of the name of God, it is plain thou art reading his absolute name, or his name not in Christ, but out of Christ: and therefore look again toward his holy temple, and view him upon the mercy-seat between the cherubims, and thou shalt see his name to be, "The consolation of Israel."

Object. 2. How can I glory in his name, for, alas! I fear I do not know this name of a God in Christ; "I am more brutish than any man, I have not the understanding of a man; I have not learned" this "wisdom, nor have I the knowledge of the holy?" *Answ.* If this be really the exercise of thy soul, it is an evidence thou hast been at the school of Christ,

for self-denial is the first lesson that he teaches all his scholars. Whenever the name of Christ is revealed to a soul, its own name, its own knowledge, attainments, righteousness, strength, and all vanish, and go as clean out of the man's sight, as the twinkling stars in the firmament when the sun arises; self hides its head when Christ is "formed." And therefore, if this sense of ignorance of the name of Christ be accompanied with an earnest desire and longing of soul to be better acquainted with this name, it is a sign thou knowest it, and shalt "follow on to know it," and that "his goings forth" to thy soul shall be "prepared as the morning." And therefore, I say, rejoice and glory in this name.

Object. 3. "I am plagued all the day long, and chastened every morning, deep calleth unto deep" with me, and therefore I cannot rejoice in this name, for through continued affliction "my harp is turned to mourning and my organ into the voice of them that weep." *Answ.* If by this affliction the Lord is "purging away thy dross," and making thee a partaker of his holiness," thou hast reason to rejoice and glory in his name, for these "light afflictions" will soon be at an end, and they will "work out for thee a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." Do but view the name of God in Christ, and it will lighten thy heart under all the burdens of affliction that lie upon thy back; "They looked unto him, and were lightened." Job, when the waters of affliction were rolling in upon him on every hand, views this name, and comforts himself with it, being enabled by it to see a scene of glory opening upon the other side of death, chap. xix. 25: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth," &c.

Object. 4. You tell me rejoice in this name, when "reproach hath broken my heart," my name is torn, my reputation sunk and covered with calumny. *Answ.* The name of Christ was covered with calumny: when he was in this world, he was called "a blasphemer, a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners;" yea, he was branded with being in league with "Beelzebub the prince of devils;" and can any thing worse be said of thy name? And, therefore, bear it patiently, and rejoice: for as the name of Christ outshone all the clouds of calumny, so shall thine, if thou be a member of Christ, and reproached for well-doing: "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye; for the Spirit of glory, and of God resteth upon you."

Object. 5. I carry such a burden of sin upon me, I have so many wants, so many plagues, so many maladies, hanging about me, that I cannot get up my heart. *Answ.* Do but read the name of God as it is in Christ, and thou shalt find

redress of all grievances, ease under all burdens, and healing of all plagues. Is it not matter of joy and triumph under a sense of guilt, that his name is "the Lord pardoning iniquity?" Is it not relief under burdens, that he bids you cast your burdens on him, and he will sustain you?" Is it not matter of joy under all wants, that "all fulness is in him" for thy supply; and under all the plagues of thy heart, that his name is "the Lord that healeth thee; that there is balm in Gilead, and a physician there?" It is the way of faith to reckon upon, and to rejoice in what the soul hath in Christ; under deadness, to rejoice that its "life is hid with Christ in God;" under self-emptiness and poverty, to rejoice in his "unsearchable riches;" under a sense of guilt, to rejoice in his resurrection from the dead as its discharge; under inability to pray, to rejoice in his intercession. And therefore, I say, learn still to glory in the name of a God in Christ.

Object. 6. I cannot get the Lord served as I would be at when I set about duty, my wicked heart turns aside like a *deceitful bow*, I drive *heavily* like the chariots of Pharaoh. *Answ.* Do you know what is the cause of your driving so heavily? You turn away your eyes from the name of God as it is set in Christ, and then, indeed, it is no wonder though your heart turn away from the living God. Do but view this name, and you shall be set upon the high places of Jacob, and thy soul shall, ere thou art aware, be made like the chariots of Amminadib.

Object. 7. I do not know if ever I believed in this name, how then shall I glory and rejoice in it? *Answ.* If thou really never yet believed in this name, believe in it now, without any longer delay, for it is manifested to be believed in. God has set forth his name in Christ as an object of faith and trust to all the world: and rejoice, oh sinner! that thou hast this name to fly to as a refuge; for it is glad tidings to men, and the sons of men, that God's name and our name are mingled together in our great Immanuel, and "they that know this name, will put their trust in it. And whereas you say you do not know if ever you believed in this name, I only ask you, Is not this name precious to thy soul? Well, that is given as an evidence and mark of faith; for "to you that believe, he is precious." Dost not thou love him, and all that bear his image? This is another mark of faith: for "faith worketh by love;" and by this "we know that we are passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

Object. 8. This is a lowering day, storms are brewing, and the clouds are raking; God seems to be upon his march with the weapons of wrath in his hand; he is making the earth to tremble and shake with the noise of wars abroad, and di-

visions at home; and is this a time of rejoicing? *Answ.* It is all true you say; but is there no comfort in that case, in the name of the Lord? Yes, there is. Let seas roar, let the nations shake, let heaven and earth blend into confusion, the name of a God in Christ is the "river that makes glad the city of God;" and therefore, I say, still "let the children of Zion be joyful in their King. The Lord setteth upon the floods; the Lord setteth King for ever; and therefore let the earth rejoice, and let the multitude of the isles be glad."

Object. 9. Jacob is brought low, the ark of God is in a great measure taken, the hedges are broken down, violence is done to God's heritage, wolves in sheep's clothing have got in to the spoiling of the tender vines; the authority of Christ, and the sacred liberties of his crown, are trodden under foot, which makes me to "weep, and hang my harp upon the willows;" how then shall I rejoice and glory in this name? *Answ.* Indeed, these things have a very melancholy aspect, and we have reason to "join trembling with our mirth," because of these sins that have provoked the Lord to smite and cover the daughter of Zion with a cloud. But yet there still remains ground of triumph and glorying in the name of a God in Christ, because by this name all Zion's enemies shall be confounded; the terror of it will at length make Zion's proud enemies and oppressors, whether they be men in civil or ecclesiastical authority, to "enter into the rock, and to hide themselves in the dust, for fear of the Lord, and for the glory of his majesty." This name cuts off the spirits of princes, and is terrible to the kings of the earth," that invade or trample upon his authority. It is the eternal joy and comfort of all the true children of Zion, however oppressed and borne down, "Zion shall yet be built up by the mighty God, when he appears in his glory, and in his majesty;" and therefore there is still ground of glorying in his name.

By the casting down of Zion, he is but making way for her upbuilding; and though she may be "afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted," yet he will "lay her stones with fair colours, and her foundations with sapphires;" and though all should go to all, the Lord will take care of his remnant of mourners: "I will gather them unto me that are sorrowful for the solemn assemblies, to whom the reproach of it is a burden."

The *fifth* thing in this use was to offer a few advices. If you would rejoice and glory in the name of God as manifested in Christ, then,

1. Write your own name in the dust, and learn to be denied to your own character and reputation in the world; for

while our name bulks in our eye, we will never venture much for the name of Christ.

2. Get faith in his name, and keep it in a lively exercise, and live by faith on the Son of God; for we are "filled with joy and peace in believing."

3. Study integrity and uprightness in your heart and way: Psal. lxiv. 10: "The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him: and all the upright in heart shall glory."

4. Mourn for your own sins, and the sins of the generation by whom this name is dishonoured. For they that sow in tears shall reap in joy. Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted" in the name of a God in Christ.

5. Whenever you lose sight of this name, run to his word and ordinances to find it again, for there it stands registered for your use; and "whatever ye do in word or in deed, do all in the name of Christ," for the name of God is in him.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Beware of him; provoke him not, for my name is in him.—
EXOD. XXIII. 21.

THE SIXTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I go on now to a *fourth* word of exhortation from this doctrine. Seeing it is so that the name of God is in Christ, then *beware of him, and provoke him not.* This is an exhortation, or a caution here given to Israel, in the words of my text; *Beware of him, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgression: for my name is in him.* We have it frequently observed in the history of the children of Israel, to whom this advice was immediately given, that they had but little regard to this awful caveat given them, with reference to the Angel of the covenant, Psal. lxxviii. 56—58; and see how he resented it in the following verses. Psal. cvi. 7, 23, 43. Now, let us not follow the example of the wicked Israelites in this matter, Psal. xcv. 8—11: "Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness; when your fathers tempted me, proved me," even when they "saw my works. Forty years was I grieved with this

generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways. Unto whom I sware in my wrath, that they should not enter into my rest." Let, I say, the example of the wicked and rebellious Israelites be a beacon to us to avoid the same rocks upon which they were ruined: let us beware of him, and be afraid to provoke him as they did.

Now, that I may illustrate and enlarge this branch of the exhortation, I shall take notice of some of the sins of Israel, by which they provoked the Angel of the covenant; and I fear that many of them shall be found in our own skirts. Let every one apply, as they are guilty before God and conscience.

1. Then, Israel provoked the angel of the covenant by their ignorance of God, and of his mind and will. "He gave his statutes unto Jacob, and his testimonies unto Israel, when he dealt not so with any nation under heaven;" and yet the great things of his law and covenant were strange things to them, they did not apply their hearts unto wisdom; and therefore the Lord complains of them by the prophet, Is. i. 3: "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider:" and the prophet, Hos. iv. 1, declares, that "the Lord had a controversy with the inhabitants of the land, because there was no truth, nor mercy, nor knowledge of God in the land."—Now, apply this to yourselves. God has set forth his name and glory to us in Christ, he has made a more glorious and bright revelation of his mind by the gospel to us in this land, than to many nations of the earth, and you in this place have been in a particular manner privileged this way: but, alas! "the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not." What lamentable ignorance, even of the first principles of religion, is to be found among many? And among those that have some light in their head, how few have taken it into their heart. I suspect the Angel of the Lord is provoked by the ignorance of many in this place, and that he is saying of not a few, "It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them, will not have mercy on them."

2. Israel provoked the angel of the covenant by their unbelief; they believed not in God, they trusted not in the Rock of their salvation. When Moses told them the mind of God, they did not give it credit; and for their unbelief their carcasses were made to drop in the wilderness: and Heb. iii. we are told, they could not enter into the promised land because of their unbelief. And when the prophets came preaching and publishing the mind and will of God to them, one after another, till Christ and his apostles, every one of them lift up

this melancholy complaint against them; "Who hath believed our report? and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" And at last, for their unbelief, in rejecting the promised Messiah, they were cut off, both from being a church and nation, and scattered through all the earth, with a mark of the divine vengeance set upon them. Oh sirs! beware of the Angel of the covenant, and provoke him not after the same example of unbelief, and "let us fear, lest a promise of rest being left us, any of us should seem to come short of it, as Israel did. Alas! how many unbelievers are there under the drop of the gospel? How few have really received Christ, and lifted up the everlasting doors of their hearts to him! Many, indeed, profess to believe in him, but evidence the quite contrary by their daily walk and conversation. A lying, stealing, drinking, whoring, swearing believer, is a contradiction; for we must prove and evidence the reality of our faith by our works: "Show me thy faith by thy works. Faith without work is dead:" a barren faith is no faith at all; for "faith worketh by love," by repentance, by obedience, by holiness, and tenderness "in all manner of conversation:" it sets folks at work to "cleanse their hands, and purify their hearts," to commence a war against all known sin, to "avoid the appearance of evil," and "to have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather to reprove them." And oh how few such believers have we among us. Sirs, for the Lord's sake, beware of deluding yourselves with a mere shadow for the solidity of faith. You see that folks' faith will be tried by their works at the day of accounts, Matth. xxv. at the close.

3. Israel provoked the Lord by their perjury and treachery, and breach of solemn covenant. God had separated that people from among all the nations of the earth, and taken them for his covenanted people, and they had avouched the Lord for their God, and promised, under the solemnity of the oath of God, that they would do his commandments, and observe his statutes and testimonies; but "they quickly turned aside like a deceitful bow;" on which account God says, that he would send a sword among them, to avenge the quarrel of his covenant. Now, let us apply this to ourselves in the days of our reformation. These lands, and particularly this, entered into solemn leagues and covenants, for preserving and carrying on a work of reformation, in opposition to Papists, Prelatists, Erastians, and Sectarians, and all malignants, or enemies of the work of reformation under whatever denomination, and to adhere to the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of the church of Christ; but, alas! how treacherously have we and our fathers dealt with the great God,

with respect to these covenant-engagements! How shamefully was the obligation of them rescinded by act of parliament; and not only so, but disgracefully and ignominiously burnt at the public cross of the capital city of the nation, and that by the countenance of authority? And, as if that had not been enough in opposition to the royal authority of the Son of God, our covenanted Head and King, the prerogatives of his crown, by act of parliament, were taken from him, and a sinful mortal vested with one of the jewels of his mediatory crown, and declared head in all causes, civil and ecclesiastical. And how many sinful compliances (with these usurpations) have there been, both before and since the revolution, contrary to these solemn covenant-engagements? We have reason to fear that God is at this day upon his march to avenge the quarrel of his holy name, that was solemnly interposed in these covenants by all ranks. Ezek. xvii. from ver. 12, and downward, we read there of an *oath* taken from the king of Judah by the king of Babylon, that he and all the land should be tributaries to him: Well, though the oath was extorted, although it was made to a heathen; yet because the name of God was interposed, God avenges the quarrel of his name upon Zedekiah for the breach of it, as you see, ver. 16—19, &c. How much more will not God avenge the breach of that oath, that was made to himself as the immediate party by king, nobles, gentry, commons, and all ranks in the land, especially when interposed for no other end but to maintain the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of his house, according to his word! How little regard has been or is had to these solemn covenants! How little personal, family, church, or state reformation appears among us, when all manner of blasphemy, error, profanity, and wickedness of all sorts, is abounding without any check! yea, when ecclesiastical judicatories themselves have been, and still are, acting the very reverse of these covenants, in violating the rights and liberties of the Lord's people! Oh, sirs! wrath from the Lord is hovering over our heads for the profanation of that great and dreadful name of the Lord, in the matter of solemn oaths and covenants, both of a more public and of a more private kind. The children of Israel were separated from the rest of the nations, and God declares them to be "a royal priesthood, a peculiar people, a holy nation," and discharged them from making any league, or entering into any affinity with these abominations; and yet they "went a whoring" after the idols and abominations of the nations round about them, worshipped their gods, and learned their sinful customs, which made the Lord to abhor them, and to write their sin upon their punishment, by

scattering them among the nations. And is not this the case with us? By solemn covenant we were engaged never to join with malignants, or any enemies of the reformation, and to improve our endeavours for the reformation of Britain and Ireland; but how are these things observed, when, contrary to these engagements, the public consent is given, that abjured prelacy and superstition shall continue in England; and when the open enemies of the covenanted reformation are not only admitted into places civil and military, but taken into the bosom of the church, and vested with the sacred rights and privileges of it? There is a great bustle and noise when one disaffected to the civil government begins to mingle in with our civil elections of magistrates; and there is good reason to exclude them: but some men who make a mighty noise about this, make little or no account of admitting this set of people, disaffected to the government of King Jesus, to mingle in themselves, in electing the rulers and governors of the house of God. Which, to me, makes it plain, that the government of an earthly prince is dearer to them, than the government of the "Prince of the kings of the earth, the King of kings, and Lord of lords."

4. Persecution and bloodshed was one of the sins of Israel, by which they provoked the Angel of the covenant to anger. They could not endure the faithful messengers and servants of God, who told them of their backslidings. We read, that in the days of Manasseh the persecution was carried that length against God's people, who adhered to the true worship of God, in opposition to the idolatry that was settled under that reign, that the very streets of Jerusalem were made to run with blood; and this was one of the sins that provoked God to bring them to utter desolation, as you read, 2 Chron. xxxvi. 15—17, &c. And Christ, in the days of his flesh, puts them in mind of it, Matth. xxiii. at the close: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee," &c. And has not the Angel of the covenant been provoked after the same manner in this land? How was this land defiled with the blood of the faithful ministers and martyrs of Christ, under some late reigns before the revolution! What heading, hanging, and quartering! what fining, confining, and banishments, were carried on by a malignant party, who were then in power and authority against all that owned a covenanted work of reformation, or adventured to worship God after the manner which they called *heresy*, insomuch that fields and scaffolds were made to reek with the blood of the dear saints of God! And it is to be feared that the cry of that blood is going up from under the altar to this day against this whole land. There have

been no due methods taken since the revolution, either by civil or ecclesiastical authority, to purge the land of that innocent blood: the cause for which the saints and servants of God suffered in these days has not been fairly espoused; yea, men whose hands were dipped in defections, bloodshed, and persecution, of these days taken into judicatories both civil and ecclesiastical, which appeared rather to be a tacit approbation of their sin, than a condemning of it. And while I am upon this subject, I judge it not amiss to put you in this city in remembrance of the barbarous and inhuman treatment that that worthy servant of Christ, Mr. James Guthrie, once a shining light from this pulpit, met with from some barbarians in it. I wish that no drops of his blood be yet sticking to any families or corporations in the place.

5. Idolatry and superstition were other sins of Israel, by which the Angel of the covenant was provoked to anger; they forsook the true worship of God appointed in the law of Moses, and fell in with the idols of the nations round about them, worshipping the host of heaven, stocks and stones, the calves of Dan and Bethel, for which God reproved them by one prophet after another, until (for their following the idols of the heathens) God was provoked to send them into bondage in the land of the heathens for seventy years. We in these lands are solemnly engaged by covenant and solemn league, to cleave to the true worship of God appointed in his word, in opposition to all Popish idolatry and superstition: and yet how much is the idolatrous mass connived at both in England and Scotland! Popish missionaries and Jesuits, we hear, are swarming, and making proselytes to their idolatrous worship, without any check from those who have the execution of the laws against popery in their hand; which gives ground to fear, that some general massacre of Protestants, like that in Ireland, may be on foot. We had need to be upon our guard against men, whose avowed principle is, that there is no faith to be kept with Protestants. And as for superstitious worship, or ceremonies of men's invention in the worship of God, it is well known how, contrary to solemn covenants, it is practised under the protection of law, and the successors to the crown obliged by law to follow and practise it, and this law confirmed by almost all sorts of persons, and that with the solemnity of the oath of God. How unlike these things look to our reformation laws and covenant, is easy to judge. It is much to be feared the Angel of the covenant is saying at this day, "How shall I pardon you for these things?"

6. Israel provoked the Angel of the covenant by luxury and intemperance, which was followed with revellings and

whoredoms. We are told that they did "eat and drink, and rose up to play; and they were like fed horses, every one neighing after his neighbour's wife. Jeshurun," when God fed him with the finest of the wheat, "waxed fat, and kicked; and forgot God that made him, and lightly esteemed the Rock of his salvation." Sirs, God has for many years together opened his granary, and given us plenty of bread, made the heavens to hear the earth, the earth to hear the corn, wine, and oil; but how are these mercies of God abused by many! especially by those that have them in the greatest plenty! Are they not used to serve and satisfy men's lusts, and as weapons by which they fight against God, instead of binding and engaging them to his service? Witness the public balls and effeminate assemblies that are so frequent, where there is nothing but eating and drinking, dancing and revelling, which are commonly attended with [lust and lasciviousness] of all sorts. By such excessive use of the good creatures of God, men act rather as beasts than reasonable creatures; and therefore no wonder if God give them over to all manner of beastly lusts, and then do with them as men do with beasts, feed them in a large place, until the day of slaughter. And, indeed, it looks as if the day of slaughter were fast approaching, when men, through intemperate drinking and night-revelling, are beginning to sheathe their swords in one another's bowels. A melancholy and recent instance of which we have had this week bygone, upon the occasion of the solemnity. I shall not take upon me to speak of the parties that have got up among us, nor determine who were in the right or wrong in that night's squabble; only I may say thus far, unseasonable and excessive drinking and caballing, and night revellings, has been the occasion of it. Had folk gone home seasonably to worship God in their families, and parted decently in due time, the confusion that has been in the city had been happily prevented. What a sore matter is it, that Stirling, through their unnatural heats and contentions, is become the obloquy and reproach of the whole nation? men come that length in their debates and contentions, as to imbrue their hands in one another's blood, yea, nearest relations thirsting after each others' blood. "Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon," that such things are done in the midst of us. I conclude this head by reading two scriptures; the first of them has been fulfilled this last week, and the other I fear shall be accomplished, if men hold on the course they are in. The first scripture, which I say has been fulfilled literally, is that, Prov. xxiii. 29, 30. "Who hath wo? who hath sorrow; who hath contentions? who hath babbling? who hath wounds without cause? who

hath redness of eyes? They that tarry long at the wine, they that go to seek mixed wine." And therefore take the caveat and advice that follows in the two next verses, ver. 31, 32: "Look not thou upon the wine when it is red," &c. Another scripture, which is yet to be accomplished as to the minatory part of it, you have, Is. xxii. 12—14: "And in that day did the Lord God of hosts call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth: and behold, joy and gladness, slaying oxen, and killing sheep, eating flesh, and drinking wine; let us eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die. And it was revealed in mine ears by the Lord of hosts, Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you, till ye die, saith the Lord God of hosts." I wish the guilty may take warning in time, lest another sort of alarm be sounded.

7. Swearing, or a horrid profanation of the name of God, was one of the sins of Israel: "Because of swearing, the land mourneth," says the prophet, Hos. iv. And have not we in this land provoked him, and are daily provoking him by the same iniquity? What a needless multiplicity of oaths is there both in the affairs of government and trade? What unlawful, dubious, and contradictory oaths have been imposed and sworn? How are the consciences of many debauched by a continual swearing of custom-house oaths? And how is the holy name of God profaned by a customary swearing by the name of the great God, or by their faith, conscience, and Christianity? And how little regard is shown to solemn oaths by some sort of men, who to get themselves into places of trust and preferment, will abjure a Popish Pretender, with a design to advance his interest? How many are there that come under personal vows, congregational vows, city vows, and yet act the very reverse of what they have vowed and sworn by the name of the great God? Let such remember that awful word, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." I fear it may be said of us at this day, as of Israel, "Because of swearing the land mourneth."

8. Israel provoked God by murmuring and repining against the conduct of divine providence. Whenever things were carried contrary to their inclination, or when reduced to any pinch and want, presently they flew in the face of Heaven, and charged God foolishly. Can God do this or that? "Can he cover a table in the wilderness?" And so they provoked the Lord to anger, and kindled the fire of his jealousy against them. And is not this also our sin in this land? God has for a long time blasted the public enterprises of the nation; he has blasted the trade, and written disappointment on many of

our undertakings; he has been making various rods to pass through among us, by which particular persons and families have been touched to the quick. And what murmuring is there against the hand of God in these things? How little fruit is there of rods, whether public or personal? So that God may say of us, as he did of Israel, "I have stricken them, but they have not grieved; I have consumed them, but they have refused to receive correction: they have made their faces harder than a rock, and have refused to return."

9. Israel provoked the Lord by gross hypocrisy and dissimulation. "When he slew them, then they sought him: they remembered that God was their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer. Nevertheless, they lied unto him with their lips," &c. And has not this been our way with God? How often have we professed to fast and mourn, to reform and amend, the evil of our ways, and yet all our pretended goodness has been "like the morning cloud, and early dew, which soon passes away?" Have we not quickly, after professions of humiliation, "returned with the dog to the vomit, and the sow that *seemed to be* washed, to wallow in the mire?" He that is filthy remains filthy still; the drunkard still follows his cups, the swearer his oaths, the treacherous dealer still continues to deal treacherously.

Quest. 1. What is the extent of that awful certification in the text, "He will not pardon your transgressions?"

Answ. 1. He will not pardon the finally unbelieving and impenitent; he will pursue an eternal controversy with them in hell.

2. He will pardon no man without a satisfaction to his justice, "He will by no means clear the guilty," unless his guilt be washed away in the blood of the Surety.

3. He will not pardon the sins of his own children without chastening them for their iniquities; he will indeed pardon their iniquities, but he will "take vengeance on their inventions. You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities," Psal. lxxxix. 31, 32, &c.; Amos iii. 2.

4. When a professing people, who have sat long under the drop of the gospel, having sinned away the day of grace, he will not pardon their transgressions, though Noah, Daniel and Job stood before him; they may indeed save their own souls, but yet God's heart cannot be towards that people.

Quest. 2. When is it that it is come to this pass with a land or church, that the Angel of the covenant will not pardon them, but is saying, as he did to Israel, Jer. v. 29, "Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul

be avenged on such a nation as this?" I shall not pretend to give positive marks; but I will tell you some things that look very like it, and you will find them in the chapter last cited, Jer. v.

1. When the number of faithful ministers and Christians is greatly decreased: when they that are valiant for the truth are thinly sown, as in ver. 1, &c.

2. When sin is become universal, as ver. 4, 5, 7, all ranks corrupting their ways.

3. When folk are turned resolute in sin, as ver. 3.

4. When folk turn impudent in sin, as in ver. 3.

5. When trials and other means do not reclaim, ver. 3: "Stricken, but not grieved," &c.: when the word does no good, Heb. vi. 8.

6. When the sins of a people are greatly multiplied, as ver. 6; Jer. xxx. 14, 15; Hos. iv. 1—3.

7. When folk turn secure, and stupid in a way of sin, promising themselves impunity, as ver. 12, 13; so Is. xxviii. 14—17.

Quest. 3. What is to be done in order to prevent matters coming to that pass, that the Angel "will not pardon?" *Answ.* Take care to obey his voice. But this leads to another exhortation, which I must refer to another occasion.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Obey his voice: for my name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE SEVENTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

A FIFTH exhortation I offer from the doctrine is this: Seeing it is so that the name of the great God is in Christ, the great Angel of the covenant; then follow the advice given here; see that you *obey his voice.* You see in the context, the verse immediately following, that the voice of the Angel is the very same with the voice of his eternal Father, ver. 22: "If thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies," &c. The three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, are one God, the same in substance, equal in power

and glory; and therefore, when one of the witnesses in heaven speak, a whole Trinity speaks. The reason here given, why we should obey the voice of Christ, is *Because my name is in him.* Says God the Father, I am in him, and therefore *obey his voice.* Hence Christ, when here upon earth, in a state of humiliation, tells the sons of men, "He that heareth me, heareth him that sent me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me." And therefore I exhort you, sirs, who are before me, to see that you obey the voice of Christ, the great Angel or Apostle of the New Testament church. Three several times was this charge repeated by a solemn proclamation from heaven, while Christ was here upon earth, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." And see an awful charge given to the same purpose by the apostle, Heb. xii. 25: "See that ye refuse not him that speaketh: for if they escaped not who refused him that spake on earth, much more shall not we escape, if we turn away from him that speaketh from heaven."

But, that I may enlarge this exhortation, I shall endeavour,

1. To inquire what we are to understand by the *voice* of Christ.

2. Inquire more particularly what his voice and language is to the present generation.

3. What it is to *obey his voice.*

4. Offer some consideration to excite and quicken sinners to *obey his voice.*

5. Offer some characters of these that are obedient to his voice.

6. Conclude with some advices how his voice is to be obeyed.

Quest. 1. What is the *voice* of Christ, which we are required to hear and obey?

Answ. For clearing of this you would know, that we are not to expect to hear the voice of Christ in that manner that Israel heard it at the delivery of the law upon mount Sinai, "which voice they that heard it, entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more: for they could not endure that which was commanded:" yea, Moses himself was made to own, "I exceedingly fear and quake," Heb. xii. 18, 21. Neither are we to think of hearing the voice of Christ in a way of immediate revelation, as the prophets under the Old Testament, and apostles under the New, to whom he spoke "at sundry times, and in divers manners," by dreams and visions. I do not think, indeed, that the Lord has so limited his adorable sovereignty, but that he may notify his mind, as to some particular events of providence, to whom,

and after what manner he pleases. But although these things may be premonitions and warnings, yet they are not the grounds of our faith, that being laid in the "more sure word of prophecy, to which we do well to take heed, as unto a light shining in a dark place." Neither must we think of hearing his voice in an oral and personal way, as the disciples and others heard him, when he was personally here upon earth: no, "the heavens are to contain him, until the time of the restitution of all things." Now, when he is upon the throne of glory and majesty at the right hand of God, he speaks not in an immediate, but in a mediate way, by his heralds and ambassadors. Hence John Baptist is called "the voice of one crying in the wilderness." 2 Cor. v. 20: "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

But more directly for an answer to the question, you would know that the voice of Christ, or of God in him, is conveyed to the children of men two ways; either by his providence, or by his word.

2. By his providential dispensations, whether of mercy or of judgment. There is not a mercy that the hand of Providence reaches to thee, O man, whether it be preventing mercy, providing mercy, sparing, or delivering mercy, but the voice of it is there. "Knowest thou not, O man, that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?" Rom. ii. 4. Oh! how sweet are they that take up, or answer this voice of God, or are led to repentance by his bounty and liberality to them? The more liberal God is to many in this generation, the more do they kick against God, like Jeshurun. But let such remember that awful caveat which you will find in the place last cited, that by the abuse of divine mercy, and impenitence under it, thou art "treasuring up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath, and revelation of the righteous judgment of God." But then the voice of God is conveyed not only in his favourable, but in his frowning dispensations. There is not a rod or judgment sent upon a person, a family, a city, or land, but the Lord's voice is there: Mic. v. 9: "The Lord's voice crieth unto the city, and the man of wisdom shall see thy name: hear ye the rod, and who hath appointed it." And by this voice of judgment the Lord seems to be crying to this city, and to all ranks in it, at this day. He has cried long to it by the voice of his servants, rising up early and sending them; but this voice of God has not been regarded by the generality, who have stopped the ear, and pulled away the shoulder; and therefore now he is beginning to speak after another manner, even by the voice of his

awful judgments, and wrath-like dispensations. Oh that, "when his judgments are in the earth, the inhabitants of the world," and the inhabitants of this city, "may learn righteousness."

2. The voice of Christ, and of God in him, is conveyed in his word either read or preached. And here, again, his voice is various. For instance, there is the still and calm voice of the gospel, where, like a "charmer, he charms never so wisely." And then there is the thundering voice of the law, issuing forth from mount Sinai, making the guilty conscience of the sinner, like the wilderness, to quake.

1*st*, In the law we may hear sometimes his commanding voice, requiring duty, "showing us what is good, and what the Lord our God requireth of us." There is his forbidding voice. "Oh do not this abominable thing that my soul hates." Many of the commands of the moral law are uttered in a way of prohibition, discharging and inhibiting us from this, and that, and the other sin. There we shall hear his warning and threatening voice, telling sinners what will be the issue, if they venture upon sin, which is a transgression of the divine law. There he warns sinners, that however sweet their sin morsels may be under their tongue, yet they will be turned into bitterness in their belly, and bite like a serpent, and sting like an adder, that the curse of God will follow it, and pursue the sinner to the lowest hell. There we have his reproving voice, rebuking sinners when they have turned away from the duty enjoined in the law. "I will sharply reprove thee, and set thine iniquities in order before thine eyes." And oh but his rebukes are awful, and full of majesty, whether in his word or providence. "We perish," says the church, "at the rebuke of thy countenance." Here we have his swearing voice, for the support of his veracity, engaged in the penalty of his law against rebellious and obstinate sinners, Psal. xcv. we are told that God did "swear in his wrath, that the rebellious Israelites should not enter into his rest:" and Is. xxii. 14: "As I live, saith the Lord God of hosts, your iniquities shall not be purged from you, till ye die." And, lastly, we have his sentencing and finally condemning voice; he has told us what is to be the doom of the ungodly world at the last day, Matth. xxv. 41: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels."

2*dly*, His voice, as I was saying, is to be heard in the gospel as well as in the law. And here we have a diversity of joyful sounds that it makes in the ears of sinners.

Here we have his teaching voice. Every doctrine of the gospel is a lesson, by which he would let sinners into the knowledge of God, and of his mind and will, as to the way

of salvation through himself. And here his voice is "meek and lowly;" and how fond is he to open the deep things of God to us? "Come hither, ye children, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord." See how he, as it were, insinuates himself upon sinners, commending his instructions to them, Prov. viii. 6—10.

In the gospel we have not only his teaching but his promising voice. He begins after the fall with the voice of promise, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent;" and with this voice he spoke to Abraham, "In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed." These two promises are opened and multiplied in a vast variety of other promises through the word to the very end of the Revelation, where the canon of the scripture is shut up. And he delights much in uttering this voice, because it is the immediate ground of faith, his faithfulness and mercy being engaged in it.

In the gospel we have his counselling voice, as to Laodicea, Rev. iii. 18: "I counsel thee to buy of me gold tried in the fire," &c. Here we have his calling and inviting voice, uttered as it were by the sound of a trumpet from the high places of the city of God, Prov. viii.: "Wisdom crieth on the tops of the high places, and chief places of concourse: Unto you, O men, do I call, and my voice is to the sons of man." That none may pretend ignorance, he orders his servants to "go out to the streets and broad ways," crying, as Is. lv. 1: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, let him come; come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price."

We have his expostulating voice sometimes in the gospel: "Wherefore do ye spend your money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which profiteth not?" O my people, what have I done unto thee, and wherein have I wearied thee? testify against me." His beseeching and entreating voice: "We beseech you, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." "We pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

Sometimes we may hear his arguing and reasoning voice: he is willing to dispute the matter with sinners, and to let them see what a bad cause they have by the hand, and how advantageous it will be to them to comply with his invitations and offers: Is. i. 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." He challenges them to a dispute, Is. xli. 21: "Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth

your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob." Sometimes we find him entering into a dispute with himself, as if he were at a stand whether to let justice or mercy take place, toward the obstinate sinner: Hos. xi. 8: "How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? my bowels are turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." Sometimes we shall hear his lamenting voice, as if he were wringing his hands, and weeping over the folly and obstinacy of sinners: Luke xix. 41, 42; "When he beheld the city, he wept over it, saying, Oh that thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace!"

Sometimes we hear his triumphing and rejoicing voice, when a prodigal sinner is brought home. There is joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner: "Let us make merry, saith the father of the prodigal; "for this, my son, was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

Thus I have given you some account of the voice of the Angel of the covenant, that has the name of God in him, both from the law and from the gospel. Sometimes he stands on mount Gerizim, and sometimes on mount Ebal; sometimes he stands on mount Zion, and sometimes on mount Sinai; he turns from the one to the other, just as he finds the case of the sinner requires it. But the design of his voice, both in law and gospel, is to persuade sinners to give him the hearing of faith, that their souls may live: and when nothing will do, then he is provoked to say, as he did to the old world, "My Spirit shall no more strive with men upon earth;" or, as he did to Ephraim, "He is joined to his idols; let him alone."

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Obey his voice: for my name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE EIGHTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

The *second* general head proposed upon this use was, to inquire what is the voice of the great Angel of the covenant to the present generation. He has been crying to all the generations that have gone before us; he spoke to the spirits, or souls of men, that are now in prison, namely, in the prison of hell, as he did to the old world in the days of Noah, by his ministry; and he is now lifting up his voice to this present generation.

And there are some more general, and some more particular cries, that he is giving at this day.

First, I say, there are some general cries that he is giving to all men every where, especially under the dispensation of the word.

1. Then, One general cry he gives to all men is, That "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" or that which he uttered to the old world, That "all flesh have corrupted their ways," "they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doth good, no not one." He is crying to all mankind since the fall, as in Jer. ii. 12, 13: "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid, be ye very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two great evils; they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters; and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water," &c. Oh sirs! hear this cry of the Angel of the covenant, and consider it, that all mankind since the fall of Adam, and therefore you in particular, are far from God; that though God "made you upright," yet you have "found out many inventions;" that though God "planted you a noble vine, wholly a right seed," yet you are become "the degenerate plant of a strange vine.—The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint; from the sole of the foot even unto the crown of the head, there is nothing but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Oh sinners! hear what the Angel is saying, and lay to heart the corruption of your nature, till you be made to acknowledge with David, "I was conceived in sin, and brought forth in iniquity.—Behold, I am vile, what shall I answer thee?" It is for want of a right uptaking of natural corruption and depravation, that the gospel has so little success, and that Christ is so little valued and prized; for "the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick."

2. The angel of the covenant, Jesus Christ, is crying to every Christless sinner, that death and the curse of God is pursuing him on the account of sin. You know the curse or penalty of the law is, "In the day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die: The soul that sinneth, it shall die:" and accordingly, "By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, in that all have sinned:" and therefore, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Oh sirs! for the Lord's sake think upon it, for he that speaks from heaven is telling you, that the vengeance of an infinite God is pursuing you on account of sin; you are "condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on you;" and therefore you are "cursed in your basket and

store, in the city and field, in your outgoings and incomings;" cursed in your soul and body; cursed in time and through eternity. And therefore I warn you, that "in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, and the wine is red; it is full of mixture, and all the wicked of the earth shall wring out the dregs thereof, and drink them."

3. Another cry I think the Angel of the covenant is giving, is that, Rom. viii. 22: "The whole creation groaneth, and travaileth in pain together until now." Whenever man sinned, the curse of God not only lighted upon him, but spread itself over the creation. The inferior creatures felt the dint of the curse of God, and were subjected to bondage, through the sin of man; yea, the very earth under our feet lies groaning under the weight of it, "Cursed is the ground for thy sake;" insomuch, that if it were not for the patience and long-suffering of the great Creator, the earth would very soon do with men and women, as it did to Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, swallow them up.

4. The Angel of God is crying to all men, that death and the grave will shortly devour and swallow them up: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." See to this purpose, Is. xl. 6—8: "The voice said, Cry. And he said, What shall I cry? All flesh is grass," &c. And, therefore, in the name of the Angel of God, I warn you to make ready for death; for that grim messenger of the Lord of hosts is every day making his approaches toward you, and will hew down these carcasses of yours, that you are now pampering and feeding; they will be a pleasant feast for the worms.

5. Another cry is, that "as it is appointed for all men once to die, so after death the judgment." Sirs, think upon it now; no sooner hath death dislodged you from these tabernacles of clay, and the eyes of your bodies shut, but that very moment you will find your souls placed before the awful tribunal of an infinite God, in order to have your eternal state determined. Oh, sirs! "prepare to meet your God, for a meeting with him you must have ere it be long. There is another sort of a scene to open upon the back of death, than you now see with your bodily eyes, or yet with the eyes of depraved reason, though assisted with revelation. And if you die out of Christ, your hearts will be stricken with a horrible surprise at the first sight of the awful and infinite majesty of God, as a vindictive Judge and implacable enemy. Oh! "who knows the power of his wrath? according to his fear, so is his wrath." Desolation and destruction will overtake the sinner as a whirlwind.

6. Another cry the uncreated Angel of the covenant is uttering by the voice of his dispensations, is that which you

have, Matth. iii. 10: "And now also the axe is laid to the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit, shall be hewn down, and cast into the fire." The awful dispensations of God, and his providential appearances, seem to have this language, that he is taking the axe of his indignation in his hand, to hew down the generation of his wrath; especially those who have had a long standing under the means of grace, and yet have continued barren. "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?" Oh, sirs! God will soon or late avenge him of his enemies, who, through unbelief and contempt of the glorious gospel, have affronted him and his Anointed; he will send forth his armies, and destroy these rebels. "Bring forth those mine enemies which would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before me." He may bear long, but he will not bear always: no, no, "my Spirit shall not always strive with men upon earth." Oh! if a fire be once kindled in his anger, it will consume the earth with its increase, it will set on fire the foundations of the mountains, and burn to the lowest hell. And, oh! "who can dwell with devouring fire? who can dwell with everlasting burnings?"

7. Another cry he is uttering, is that, Prov. i. 20—23: "Wisdom crieth without, she uttereth her voice in the streets! How long, ye simple ones, will ye love simplicity?" &c. He is crying to all men every where to repent, as Is. lv. 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts," &c. Ezek. xxxiii. 7: "Turn ye, turn ye; why will ye die, O house of Israel? for as I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of sinners," &c. Oh, sirs, the Angel that has his Father's name is crying to you to flee from the wrath that is to come, for "there is yet hope in Israel concerning you;" if you will flee to him, he will hide and deliver you from the wrath of God, the rage of men and devils; and therefore turn ye to your strong-holds, ye prisoners of hope." Thus I have told you of some general cries to all men."

Secondly, I will tell you of some more particular cries he is sending out at this day to people of several ranks in the land.

1. The Angel that bears his Father's name, and who utters the voice of God, is crying to the powers and potentates of the earth at this day, "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice." "Promotion cometh neither from the east, west, south, or north: it is I that set up one, and cast down another." He is saying to them, "Ye are called gods; but ye shall die like men, and fall like one of the princes." And, therefore, "Be wise, ye kings; be instructed, ye judges of the

earth, lest I break you as with a rod of iron, and dash you," and your nation, "in pieces, as a potter's vessel."

2. The Angel of God is uttering his voice, and crying to England and Ireland, and particularly to this land, because of their perfidious dealing with him in the matter of solemn leagues and covenants for reformation, and other abominations, under which the lands are groaning. I think, I say, that the voice of the Angel to these lands is what you have, Is. xxiv. 1—6: "Behold, the Lord maketh the earth empty, and maketh it waste," &c. Oh! sirs, I fear there be a sad reckoning for covenant-breaking and bloodshed against these lands. The voice of the Angel in the present confusions abroad, and divisions at home, seems to be, "Behold the Lord cometh out of his place to punish the inhabitants of the earth for their iniquities. And, shall I not visit for these things? shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?"

3. The voice of the Angel to nobles and gentry, and all the rich and great ones of the land, who have generally cast off the very form of religion, and given themselves up to luxury, oppression, and revelling, and caballing; I say, his voice to these seems to be that, Jer. v. 5, 6: "I will get me unto the great men, and will speak unto them; for they have known the way of the Lord, and the judgment of their God; but these have altogether broken the yoke, and burst the bonds," &c. And Jam. v. 1—5: "Go to, now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you," &c.

4. The voice of the Angel to the corrupt ministers of Scotland, and these that join with them in spoiling the Lord's vineyard, and his tender vines in the land, and who cast snares and stumbling blocks before the Lord's people, marring instead of maintaining and carrying on a covenanted reformation; his voice to them, and all their patrons, from the highest to the lowest, with whom they bandy, to the spoiling of the poor people of God, is that, Is. iii. 12—15: "As for my people, children are their oppressors," &c. and Hos. v. 1, and ix. 7, 8, &c. The voice of the Angel, particularly to all intruders into the ministry, and these that join hands with them, and abet them in their intrusions, is that, Jer. xxiii. 21, 22, and xxv. 34, 35, to the close. Ezek. xiii. from ver. 10 to ver. 16.

5. The voice of the angel to the poor scattered and oppressed flock of Christ, that are mourning because of the abounding wickedness and defections of the day, and because of the oppression of the enemy, is like that, Psal. xii. 5: "For the sighing of the poor, for the cries of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord, to set them free from these that are too strong for them;" and that of Zeph. iii. 18; "I will

gather them unto me that are sorrowful for the solemn assemblies, to whom the reproach of it is a burden;" and that, Mic. ii. 12, 13: "I will surely assemble, O Jacob, all of thee; I will surely gather the remnant of Israel, I will put them together as the sheep of Bozrah, as the flock, in the midst of their fold: they shall make great noise by reason of the multitude of men. The breaker is come up before them: they have broken up, and have passed through the gate, and are gone out by it, and their king shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them." The Angel of the covenant, he is also the tender Shepherd of Israel, "who gathers the lambs with his arms," &c.

6. The Angel of the covenant is crying to all his faithful servants and ambassadors, who are endeavouring to maintain the work of God, and to bear witness for him, against the corruptions of the day and generation, and to hold up Christ's standard and testimony, in opposition to those who would pull it down; he is saying to them, "Cry aloud, and spare not, lift up your voice like a trumpet, tell the house of Judah and Israel their abominations."—"Be ye faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life."—"Keep the word of my patience, and I will keep you in the hour of temptation, that shall come to prove them that dwell upon the earth."

I will conclude with a few cries he is yet uttering from mount Zion; for if I could help it, I do not love to stand long on mount Sinai, or Ebal; but what the Lord bids us, that we must speak, whether it be good or bad.

1. He is crying to the condemned sinner to come to him, and he shall have a free pardon of all his sins: Is. i. 18: "Come, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet and crimson, I will make them white as snow and as wool." Is. lxiii. 25: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own name's sake."

2. He is crying to the rebels to submit, and they shall have peace: Is. xxvii. 4, 5: "Fury is not in me: who would set the briers and thorns against me in battle? I would go through them, I would burn them together. But let him take hold of my strength, that he may make peace with me, and he shall make peace with me. We are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

3. He is crying to captives to accept of liberty, and he will make them free indeed: "The lawful captive shall be delivered," &c. Liberty from sin, from Satan, and the world, &c.

4. He is crying to the wounded and diseased soul to come to him and be healed, for his name is JEHOVAH ROPHI. There is healing in his wings for every disease, &c.

5. He that is crying to the weary and burdened soul to come unto him for rest, Matth. xi. at the close. Psal. lv. 22: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and he will sustain thee," &c.

6. He is crying to the ignorant to come to him for instruction, for he hath pity on the ignorant, that are groaning under a sense of ignorance: "Come hither, ye childern, and I will teach you the fear of the Lord. He is made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

7. He is crying to naked souls that have not a rag to cover them, to come to him for clothing, for the garments of salvation and the robes of righteousness. "Hearken unto me, ye that are stout-hearted, and far from righteousness. Behold, I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry."

8. He is crying to the hungry and starving soul to "come, eat of his bread:" Is. xxv. 6: "A feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Is. lv. 1, Prov. viii. at the beginning. Prov. ix. at the beginning.

9. He is crying to the sinner that is bewildered, and cannot find the way to life and happiness, that he is given for a "leader and commander," and that he "leads the blind in a way they know not."

10. He is crying to the base-born sinner, to come unto him, and he will give them "the adoption of children," a place in God's family that shall never be cut off:" John i. 12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." Gal. iv. 4, 5: He was "made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

11. He is crying to the sinner that is in a compact and confederacy with hell, to break his covenant with hell, and his agreement with death, and take hold of his covenant of grace and peace: Is. lv. 3: "Incline your ear and come unto me; hear, and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.

12. He is crying to the sinner that is upon the very borders of hell and eternity, to believe in him, to look unto him, and be saved.

Now, sirs, for the Lord's sake hear the voice of the Angel; for you see, if you do not hear, he will not pardon your transgressions, for his Father's name is in him. Oh! "how shall ye escape, if ye turn away from him that speaketh from heaven?"

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Obey his voice: for my name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE NINTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I am still upon the *second* general head in discoursing this branch of the exhortation in the text, *Obey his voice: for my name is in him.*

I told you what we are to understand by the *voice* of Christ; and come, *secondly*, to tell you what is the voice of Christ to the present generation. I told you, in six particulars, what seemed to be the Lord's voice to all in general. I told you, more particularly, what seemed to be his voice to the powers of the earth; what seemed to be his voice to these lands, and this land especially; what his voice is to the nobles and gentry; what his voice is to a corrupt ministry, that are unfaithful to the souls of men, or run when he does not send them; what his voice was to the mourners in Zion, the Lord's oppressed ones; and what his voice is to all the faithful servants and ambassadors at this day, who are witnessing for him against the corruptions and abominations of the day; and then turned to mount Zion, and told you of twelve cries that he was sending forth from thence.

I proposed to tell you of some cries that the Angel seems to be sending forth to this city and congregation of Stirling at this day, and to several sorts of sinners, that are to be found in the midst of it. And, sirs, remember that we who are ministers, are but earthen trumpets, through which the voice of God is conveyed to you; we are the "voice of the Angel crying in the wilderness" to men of this generation, as John Baptist's voice was to the generation wherein he lived. And if the voice of the Angel, speaking by us, touch any man, or point to him in particular, let him remember that it is not the earthen trumpet he has to do with, but he that sounds it, or speaks through it. We that are ministers, are ambassadors for Christ; and ambassadors must deliver their king's commission, whether men will hear or forbear; for they speak upon the peril of their souls, which no wise man will risk, either for the pleasure or displeasure of mortal worms, of whatever quality in the world; for if we please men, our great Lord has declared, that we are not his servants.

Perhaps some are beginning to say already, Minister, we wish you would let us alone; preach the general truths of

the word, but do not meddle with the particular evils of the place, or persons or parties in it. To such I shall only say, that it discovers guilt in any party or person whatever, when they cannot endure the plain truths of the word to be preached, without being irritated or offended. We are in Christ's stead, and if we utter any thing that does not correspond with our commission from the Lord, you are at liberty to reject it; but if we keep by our commission, and deliver nothing but what is the voice of the Angel, remember that it is hard for you to "kick against the pricks." And, with respect to you who cannot endure plain dealing from the word, but would have general and smooth truths preached and insisted upon in a time of abounding and crying sin, see what is the voice of the Angel to you, Is. xxx. 12—14. Read from ver. 8, and downward, where you will see the persons characterized, to whom the word of the Lord is there spoken: "They said to the seers, See not; and to the prophets, Prophesy unto us smooth things." They chose rather to be soothed and flattered to their own destruction, than to have their sores touched, and the truth told them, to the preservation and salvation of their souls. They could not endure to be troubled with harsh and repeated warnings from God. But see what God says by the prophet in the next words, ver. 12—14: "Wherefore, thus saith the holy One of Israel, Because ye despise this word, and trust in oppression and perverseness, and stay thereon; therefore this iniquity shall be to you as a breach ready to fall, swelling out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly at an instant," &c. You that spurn at the reproofs, or warnings, or threatenings, of the word, and love only to have smooth things preached to you, take care, for you are here told of your danger by the Lord of hosts; you are in danger of a surprising ruin, "the breaking shall come suddenly in an instant," when ye do not expect it, "like the breaking of a potter's vessel."

But now I come to tell you what I think is the Lord's voice to this city and congregation; for "the Lord's voice is crying in the city," though it is only the man of wisdom that will hear and obey the design of it. There are these two or three cries that I think the Angel is giving to the city in general.

1. The *first* is that which you have been hearing from the mouth of your aged minister for some time; Matth. xxi. 43: "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to others bringing forth the fruits thereof." This city and congregation have been long privileged with the gospel in purity; the privileges of the kingdom of grace, and the way to the kingdom of glory, have been opened to you. The laws

and the statutes of the kingdom have been published among you, by his heralds, whom he has sent one after another since the reformation from Popery; but where is the fruit of all this among the bulk and generality? how few are they that believe the gospel-report, and bring forth the fruits thereof, in their lives and conversation? And therefore the Lord has been, and still is, crying, "The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to others bringing forth the fruits thereof." You may see what the Lord says to, and does with, his barren vineyard, after all the pains he used with it, Is. v. 2—6: "And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof," &c. Now, seeing the same cry is lifted up among you in this place, you had need to hear and take warning, lest the issue be fatal, as it was to the children of Israel. "If God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he spare not thee," &c.

2. The *second* cry to this city in particular, may be that which you have, Is. lvii. 1: "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." God's little remnant, however little they may be thought of by some, yet they are the pillars of the land or city where they live: they stand in the gap to keep off the flood of wrath from the Lord, that is ready to break in upon a sinful place: Is. i. 9: "Except the Lord of hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we had been as Sodom, and been made like unto Gomorrah." It was the want of a very small handful of righteous persons in Sodom, that made hell to fall out of heaven upon that wicked people. And therefore when the Lord is taking away the righteous out of a place by death or otherwise, it is a sign that evil from the Lord of hosts is determined against that place. And is not this the case with us? The Lord is weeding up his own, and taking them away to their rest; and when few are laying such strokes to heart, it bodes ill to the place, and has a loud cry from the Angel of God's presence, that he is on his way to punish us for our iniquities.

3. Another cry that the Angel seems to be giving to this city, is that which you have, Mat. xii. 25: "Every kingdom divided against itself, is brought to desolation: and every city or house divided against itself, cannot stand." It is a thing too well known now through the nation, to what a height party humour and interest have run, even to the effusion of blood and legal prosecutions before courts of justice. I do not design to dip into party quarrels; only I notice that the voice of these unnatural jars and divisions is, that the city is near a fall and ruin. It is a common and known maxim, and

holds true to all societies, whether of one kind or another, That, commonly, ruin is the consequence of unnatural quarrels; that divisions end in desolations. "If we bite and devour one another, we shall be devoured one of another," Gal. v. 15. Churches and nations have known this by long experience. God first divided the builders of Babel, and then he scattered them. God sent a spirit of division among the inhabitants of Jerusalem, before they were utterly destroyed by the Roman armies. And, seeing division and contention has been the common forerunner of ruin, both in cities and kingdoms, we have reason to think, that the cry of the Angel to us in this city is, that ruin and desolation is near.

4. Another cry that the Angel of God's presence is sending to this city, consequential to the former, is that which you have, Mark ix. 50: "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another." You know the use of salt is to keep flesh or other things from putrefaction. There are many putrefying lusts in the hearts of men, from whence wars and divisions spring, Jam. iv. 1. Now, in order to the cure of these putrefying lusts, let the salt of God's word and grace have room and place within you, and then your contentions will soon cease, and men will be at peace one with another. Perhaps, indeed, the salt of divine truth may gall and nip corruptions and lusts; but when it does so, do not spurn at the medicine, and him that applies it, but bear it with patience, and let it "have its perfect work," until the sore be cured; for better to be salted, and have your sores touched with the word, than to be salted with the fire of God's vengeance, as you see our Lord argues with the Jews in the context. If there be any unmortified lust pointed out to you by the word, take care, and cut it off, and pluck it out, though as dear to you as a right hand or a right eye; for better that, "than be cast soul and body into the fire of hell;" and therefore hear the voice of the Angel; "Have salt in yourselves, and be at peace one with another." Yea, the voice of the Angel goes a little farther, if men were able to bear it, and you will see what he says, Matth. v. 44: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." This is a hard saying to corrupt nature, especially when men's spirits are aloft, pursuing their resentments against one another. But, sirs, remember that vengeance is the Lord's, and he will repay it: and therefore when men bite and devour one another out of resentment, and to satisfy their revenge, they are taking God's work off his hand, and invading his prerogative; and they that do so, while they avenge themselves, they are exposing themselves to the

vengeance of God, who has said, *Vengeance is* not yours, but *mine;* leave that to me, and *I will repay it.* But as for us when we are injured, he would have us to follow his own example, and to render good for evil: hence is that reason that our Lord gives for that hard saying of loving and doing good to our enemies, ver. 45: "That ye may" resemble and prove yourselves to "be the children of your Father which is in heaven, who maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust."

And if you would yet know more of the Angel's mind, with relation to your present differences, you may read the preceding part of the chapter, from ver. 21 to 26, and from ver. 38, to the close of the chapter.

5. Another cry that the Angel is giving to us in this place, is that which the prophet Zechariah was ordered to cry to Jerusalem in a day like this, chap. viii. 16, 17: "These are the things that ye shall do: Speak ye every man the truth to his neighbour; execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates. And let none of you imagine evil in your hearts against his neighbour, and love no false oath: for all these are things that I hate, saith the Lord." And to the same purpose is that, chap. vii. 9—14: "Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, Execute true judgment, and show mercy and compassions every man to his brother. And oppress not the widow, nor the fatherless, the stranger, nor the poor, and let none of you imagine evil against his brother in your heart," &c.

Thus I have told you what I take to be the voice of the uncreated Angel of the covenant to us in this place: and I take instruments in every man's conscience, that these presents are intimated in the name of the Lord, without feud or favour, without regard to one side or another.

EVENING EXERCISE.

I THOUGHT to have gone on to tell you what the Angel of God is crying to some sorts of sinners among us. I cannot insist on particulars, only in short,

1. He is crying to all that turn their back on ordinances, "He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be an abomination."

2. He is crying to all prayerless persons and families, (and I fear there are too many of these,) that he "will pour out his fury upon the heathen, and all the families that call not on his name."

3. He is crying to ignorant persons under the means of instruction; "It is a people of no understanding; therefore he that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour."

4. He is crying to every unbelieving sinner, that he is "condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him."

5. He is crying to all hypocritical professors, that satisfy themselves with "a name to live while dead," "The sinners in Zion shall be afraid, and fearfulness shall surprise the hypocrite in heart."

6. He is crying to all legalists that are sitting down upon their morality, civility, or good works done by them, as the foundation of their acceptance before God, that "by the works of the law no flesh living can be justified;" that "publicans and harlots shall enter into the kingdom of God before them."

7. He is crying to all that are resting upon their convictions, their flashes of joy or sorrow, their faith, love, joy, repentance, or any thing within them, as grounds of acceptance, or good claims of eternal life, as Is. l. ult. "Behold, all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire, and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have of mine hand, ye shall lie down in sorrow."

8. He is crying to all profaners of the name of God, whether by a customary swearing, or by rash or false oaths; "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain: for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain." And to those that deal in a stealing and swearing trade, he is saying, as Zech. v. 2—4. And he said unto me, What seest thou? And I answered, I see a flying roll, the length thereof is twenty cubits, and the breadth thereof ten cubits. Then said he unto me, This is the curse that goeth forth over the face of the whole earth: for every one that stealeth shall be cut off, as on this side according to it, and every one that sweareth shall be cut off as on that side according to it. I will bring it forth, saith the Lord of hosts, and it shall enter into the house of the thief, and into the house of him that sweareth falsely by my name: and it shall remain in the midst of his house, and shall consume it, with the timber thereof, and the stones thereof.

9. He is crying to all Sabbath-breakers, to "remember his day, to keep it holy, to call it their delight, the holy of the Lord, and honourable."

10. He is crying to all disobedient children, to *honour their parents*, and to hearken to their good counsel; and they that will not, they shall be "cut off from the land which the Lord

God hath given us: The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." The voice of the Angel to every young body is that, Eccl. 1: "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth."

11. His voice to murderers, or all these whose hands are dipped in their neighbour's blood, as the hands of some were of late in this place, is, that "when he maketh inquisition for blood, he will remember them;" and that the hands that shed innocent blood, are an abomination to him; and that they who thirst after blood, "shall have blood to drink."

12. He is crying to all liars and backbiters, calumniators, who murder the reputation of their neighbours; and a spirit of lying and calumny is gone abroad at this day: I say, the voice of the Angel to you is, "What shall be given unto thee? or what shall be done unto thee, O thou false tongue? Sharp arrows of the mighty, with coals of juniper."

13. He is crying to all fornicators, adulterers, and unclean persons, that he himself will "judge them, and they shall not inherit the kingdom of God," or of Christ.

14. He is saying to all drunkards, Epicures, and sensual persons, that make their belly their God, that their "end is destruction;" that "in the hand of the Lord there is a cup, the wine is red, and full of mixture, and all the wicked of the earth shall wring out the dregs thereof, and drink them."

To conclude, he is saying to all obstinate, and impenitent, and rebellious sinners, that will not obey his voice, or turn at his reproof, "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" and that if they turn not, he is whetting his glittering sword, and preparing for them the instruments of death. And, oh! "when he whets his sword, and his hand takes hold on judgment, he will render vengeance to his enemies, and a reward to all them that hate him."

If, after all that has been said, any profane mocker should laugh and flout at the warnings given them, and laugh at the shakings of God's spear, as if this were not the word of the Lord that we have delivered to them; I shall only say, that the bands of mockers shall be made strong. We see such a set of men in the days of Jeremiah, chap. v. 12, 13. But see what is the voice of the Angel to these men in the following verses, 14, 15, &c. Thus I have done with the *second* thing upon this exhortation, and told you what appears to be the voice of the Angel to the present generation.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Obey his voice: for my name is in him.—EXOD. XXIII. 21.

THE TENTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

THE *third* thing was, to inquire what is imported in obeying the voice of the Angel. To this I answer,

1. Negatively, it does not consist in a bare hearing of the sound of words, when a chapter is read, or a sermon preached. Alas! this is all that many know of the voice of Christ in the dispensation of the gospel; they hear the ministers' voice, and the words they utter, but know no more about the matter; as is evident from the great ignorance of not a few, which casts up when they are catechised about the common principles of religion, which they are hearing every day. Neither does it consist in a hearing the word with some transient pleasure, like Ezekiel's hearers, whose "voice was unto them as a very lovely song," while yet, though their affections were tickled, yet their hearts were never touched. Nor is it to hear and do something, like Herod; or to take up a profession of religion while the power of it is neglected; it is not a crying, *Lord, Lord*, like those mentioned Matth. vii. 22.

Quest. What, then, is it to obey the voice of the Angel, Jesus Christ?

Answ. 1. It implies a knowledge and uptaking of Christ and of his voice: "My sheep," says Christ, "know my voice." There is something of a divine light, life, and power, in the voice of Christ, that the soul is made to feel to its experience, by which it can distinguish between his voice, and the voice of a stranger: "It is the voice of my beloved," says the spouse; I know it to be his, and not another's.

2. It implies a diligent attention of mind to what the Lord speaks, either by his word or his providence. "Speak, Lord," will the soul say, "for thy servant heareth." This is what the Lord requires of us, Is. lv. 2, 3: "Hearken diligently unto me.—Incline your ear:—hear, and your souls shall live." While Lydia hearkened diligently to the voice of the Angel in the ministry of Paul, the Lord *opened her heart*. Do you know what it is to have your minds and hearts so arrested in hearing of the word, that your ear and mind is, as it were, tied to the minister's mouth in hearing? Alas! there are many

hearers whose minds are "in the ends of the earth" when hearing of "the word of the kingdom."

3. It implies a belief and persuasion of what the Angel speaks to be the voice of God. It is said of the Thessalonians, that they "received the word, not as the word of men, but as it is indeed the word of God." The man looks above and beyond the earthen vessel through which the word is conveyed, and hears God himself, whose voice is full of majesty and power. Sirs, as long as the devil can persuade you, that your ministers are only speaking their own thoughts and conceptions, he is easy how much or how frequently you hear the word, for he knows well, that until you hear the word preached as the voice of Christ, your hearing will do no service to your souls, or no hurt to his kingdom. You know that while Samuel mistook the voice of the Lord, as if it had been the voice of Eli, he ran the wrong way; so while men come near and hear the word preached, and fancy that it is only the voice or word of a man like themselves, they will run the wrong way; it will never have any impression upon heart or life, to turn them from sin to God: but whenever the voice of Christ is taken up in the word or providence, they run directly to the Lord himself, saying, as Israel did, Jer. iii. 22, 23: "Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God. Truly, in vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and from the multitude of mountains: truly, in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel."

4. It implies application of the word to a man himself in particular. Oh! says the man, it is to me that this word of threatening, this word of promise or command, is directed, and the Lord is pointing out me in particular by it, as though he were calling me by name and surname. There are some hearers that have a dexterity of applying the word to others; Oh, will they say, the minister met with such a one, he fell foul upon such a man or party: but though their own idol be touched, they take no notice of that; or when a Saviour is revealed and offered, they imagine that this is only to the elect, or to believers. But, sirs, they that obey the voice of Christ, take him up as directing his word to them; and therefore they bring it home to their own souls in particular, as though they heard Christ saying, as Nathan did to David, "Thou art the man."

5. It implies an esteem and approbation of what the Angel speaks: "Good is the will of the Lord." The man's will bends and stoops to the will of the Lord, when intimated to him, either by his word or by his providence, and he loves and approves it as "worthy of all acceptation." "O, how

love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day. I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right." He esteems the word of promise, and "rolls it like a sweet morsel under his tongue," saying, "It is sweeter to me than honey from the honey-comb:" he esteems the word of command, and cries, "I delight in the law of the Lord, after the inward man;" he would have it written in his heart, and hidden in his inner parts.

6. It implies a regulating of heart and life according to the voice of Christ in his word. The man is not simply a hearer, but a doer of the word. "He that doeth the will of God, shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself." There are many hearers of the gospel, who gather up more of the manna of the word than they make good use of; they have it in their heads and memories, but it never either enters into the heart or practice; and so it turns to the worms and vermin of pride and hypocrisy, and so lands in their destruction, not in their edification. But they that hear the voice of Christ in his word by faith, study to reduce all to practice; hence it is, that the light of the word within them shines out in their walk, so as others "seeing their good works, are made to glorify their Father which is in heaven." Thus you see what is implied in obeying the voice of the Angel.

The *fourth* thing upon this use, was to offer some considerations to excite and engage you to hear and obey the voice of the great Angel of God's presence. You see here that the command of God is express and peremptory upon this head, *Beware of him, and obey his voice;* which is the very same with that voice three times issued out from the excellent glory concerning him, when he was yet in a state of humiliation: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." The frequent repetition of this charge plainly says, that it is a matter of the last consequence and moment to us, that we indeed obey his voice. To excite you to it,

Consider, 1. Whose voice it is that you are required to obey. You see here that it is the voice of the Angel of God in the preceding verse: "Behold, I send mine Angel before thy face, to lead thee," &c. Christ is called an *Angel*, because he is the *Sent* of God, or the great Ambassador of Heaven, the Messenger of the covenant, who was much sought after by the saints under the Old Testament, Mal. iii. 1. It is not the voice of any created angel, but of the great uncreated Angel, even the Lord and the Prince of angels, for "by inheritance he has obtained a more excellent name than they." This Angel has "a *name* above every name that is named, whe-

ther in this world, or in that which is to come," and is "set down at the right hand of God, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and hath all things put under his feet:" and therefore *beware of him, and obey his voice.* If you ask farther whose voice it is? I answer, It is the voice of the great Messiah, whom the world was expecting with impatience for the space of four thousand years. It is the voice of Immanuel, God-man, *God with us;* the voice of God speaking in our nature, for "he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." Oh! shall we not hear the voice of an incarnate God, or of God manifested in the flesh? It is the voice of a Redeemer, O sinner, who has paid a ransom to justice for thee, that thou mayest not go down to the pit. Oh! how hard is it that he should "pour out his soul unto death," and bear the curse of the law, and the wrath of the Father for us, and yet not to get a hearing from us? It is the voice of a Mediator who negotiates thy peace with God, O sinner, and who has, to effect the reconciliation between God and man, "endured the cross, and despised the shame, and is now at the right hand of God," in the quality of an advocate with the Father, "making intercession for the transgressors." Would it not be reckoned strange, if a client, who has a cause of great importance depending before a court, should refuse to obey the voice of his advocate, who pleads his cause? It is the voice of thy Surety, O sinner, who paid for thy debt, and satisfied for all thy crimes: "He was wounded for *thine* iniquities, bruised for *thy* transgressions," he has paid the round sum under which thou hadst drowned for ever; and yet shall he not get a hearing? It is the voice of the Shepherd of Israel, that "leads Joseph like a flock, and who gathers the lambs with his arms, who carries them in his bosom;" and will not the sheep hear the voice of their Shepherd? It is the voice of the great Prophet, who reveals the will of God for our salvation. The voice of the great Priest of the New Testament church, who is over the house of God, and hath the keys of the house hanging at his girdle, and who opens, and no man shuts, and shuts, and no man opens. It is the voice of Zion's King; and shall not the children of Zion hear and obey the voice of their King, who "rules in Jacob, and to all the ends of the earth?" It is the voice of "the King of kings, and Lord of lords." It is the voice of the Prince of the kings of the earth. In a word, you see in the context, it is the voice of God, and not of man; the name and nature, the majesty and glory of his eternal Father is in him, *Obey his voice, for my name is in him:* and in ver. 22: "Thou shalt obey his voice, and do all that

I speak." He and the Father are one in nature, and have one and the same voice; and should not this engage you to obey it?

Consider, 2. To whom this voice is directed. You see that it is directed to men, and to the sons of men, Prov. viii. 4: "Unto you, O men," says Christ, the essential Wisdom of God, "do I call, and my voice is to the sons of man." And what is man that he should spend a word of his mouth upon him? "Man in his best estate is altogether vanity." What was Adam, in his best innocence, but a piece of red clay, enlivened by the breath of the Almighty, and beautified with his image? But what is man in his fallen state? He is ten thousand times "worse than nothing and vanity." Oh! sinner, "look to the rock whence thou art hewn, and the hole of the pit whence thou wast digged," and thou wilt find thy genealogy derived from hell, a child of the devil, an heir of wrath, dead in trespasses and sins, lying under the curse of a broken law, with the sentence of death, every moment lying upon the brink of utter destruction; and shall not such a creature as this hear and obey the voice of the great God, issued forth by the Angel of his presence? In short, there is not a soul hearing me, but the voice of the Angel is directed to you in particular, as much as though there were none hearing me but thyself; for we preach this gospel, and sound the trumpet of the law, to every creature, every rational creature, on this side of hell. Art thou a sinner? His voice to thee from mount Sinai is, "The soul that sinneth, shall die:" but his voice from mount Zion is, "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; he came not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." In short, let thy sins be ever so many, and ever so highly aggravated, yet his voice, if thou be out of hell, to thee, is, "I am the door: by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved.—Whosoever cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." And where the Angel makes no exception, it is none of our business to except ourselves, or to score our own name out of his commission. And I know nothing that can exclude you out of his commission, but final unbelief: that does it effectually; for the Angel himself has said, "He that believeth not, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

Consider, 3. After what manner the Angel of God is crying to you in this gospel.

1*st*, He cries openly from the tops of the high places, and in the chief places of concourse.

2*dly*, He cries audibly; he does not "mutter, or peep," but he speaks up, he speaks out, he cries aloud, as with the

sound of a trumpet; he makes no secret of his commission to you.

3*dly*, He cries importunately. O how loath is he to take a refusal at the hands of lost sinners! he beseeches you to be reconciled to him, and to God through him; he cries and weeps over Jerusalem; Luke xix. 41: "When he beheld the city, he wept over it," and would as gladly have *gathered* them, "as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings."

4*thly*, He cries with an alluring and charming voice: "We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned unto you, and ye have not lamented." He, as it were, suits his voice to the case of the sinner, to see if any way he may be allured, and drawn to him. Oh sirs! "hear the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely."

5*thly*, He is very constant in his cry, he stretches out his hand all the day long, saying, "Behold me, behold me." "Behold, I stand at the door, and knock: If any man will hear my voice, and open the door, I will come in and sup with him, and he with me."

Consider, 4. Who concurs with the voice of the great Angel of the covenant. His voice alone should command our attention; but there is a manifold concurrence of voices with his from heaven above, and from earth beneath, all inviting and requiring you to obey his voice.

1*st*, The voice of the Father concurs, saying, *Obey his voice, for my name is him. Hear ye him, for this is my beloved Son.*

2*dly*, The voice of the Holy Ghost concurs: Heb. iii. 7: "As the Holy Ghost saith, To-day, if ye will hear his voice." So that, in this respect, it is to sin against the Holy Ghost not to hear the voice of the Son of God; and that is a dangerous risk: and if you continue to reject the voice of the Spirit in the Son, "it shall never be forgiven you, either in this world or in that which is to come."

3*dly*, The voice of all the angels in heaven concurs. If they were allowed to speak, as they did at his nativity, they would with one voice cry, O hear the voice of your great Lord and Master; for to you was he born, and for you did he die, "Peace on earth, and good-will towards man." And when a sinner, by faith, obeys the voice of Christ, "there is joy in heaven among the angels of God."

4*thly*, The voice of all faithful ministers, the friends of the Bridegroom, is, to hear his voice, and obey it. We are but his heralds, through whom his voice is conveyed to you; and "as though God did beseech you by us, we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."

5thly, The voice of the bride concurs; all true believers, who have already believed or obeyed his voice: Rev. xxii. 17: "The Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth, say, Come. And let him that is athirst, come: And whosoever will, let him come and take of the waters of life freely."

Consider, 5. The evil and danger of disobeying the voice of the great Angel, who is now speaking to you from heaven. You see in the words of my text there is an awful certification added with respect to these that do not obey his voice, *Obey his voice, provoke him not: for he will not pardon your transgressions.* I shall more particularly represent the danger of not obeying the voice of Christ, speaking particularly in a gospel-dispensation.

1st, It is an egregious affront offered to the glorious Majesty of God, not to obey the voice of Christ. This is implied here, *My name is in him,* and therefore *obey his voice;* for if he be disobeyed and disregarded, I look upon it as an indignity done to myself. Hence Christ tells us in the New Testament, "He that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me. It is the Father's will, "that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father." Oh sirs! unbelief, which is the fundamental act of disobedience to the voice of the Angel, is such an affront to the Majesty of God, that it gives the lie to a whole Trinity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost: "He that believeth not, hath made God a liar." And "will you provoke the Lord to jealousy? are you stronger than he?"

2dly, Consider, that God will require it, if the voice of the Angel be disobeyed. You see an awful word to this purpose, Deut. xviii. 18, 19: "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever will not hearken unto my words which he shall speak in my name, I will require it of him."

Quest. How is it that God doth require or resent it, when the voice of Christ, the great Angel of the covenant, is disobeyed?

I answer in general, He resents it by fixing the sinner under the curse and condemnation of the broken law. Christ comes in a gospel-dispensation, to a company of sinners, who are already condemned, and sentenced to death by the sin of the first Adam, and their own original and actual sin, and offers to liberate them from the condemnatory sentence that the law has laid them under; he offers himself as a responsible Surety, to stand between them and all hazard, so as there

shall be no condemnation to them, if they will believe in him. Well, the sinner, by unbelief, rejects the blessed Surety and Saviour, he despises the riches of God's grace, and chooses to stand upon the footing of his own righteousness, or to cast himself upon the absolute mercy of God. And what is the fruit of this? God avenges the affronts and indignities done to his Son, by casting back the sinner that rejected his great ordinance for salvation, unto the hand of the law as a covenant; and then he is cursed and condemned to purpose, and the vengeance of the law is doubled through his contempt of Christ, the only remedy. Hence we are told, John iii. "He that believeth not, is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him:" and, Oh! "who knows the power of his wrath," that abideth on them that refuse to obey the voice of Christ in this gospel?

I will only tell you, in a few particulars, farther, what will follow upon it, if you do not hear the cries that the Angel of God's presence has been sending in among you, by his word and providential dispensations.

(1.) Sin will get the full power and ascendency over you; you will be given up to the empire and reign of your own lusts, than which there cannot be a greater judgment on this side of hell: Psal. lxxxi. 11: "My people would not hearken to my voice: and Israel would none of me. Wherefore I gave them up unto their own hearts' lusts: and they walked after their own counsels." And what will the man stick at, that is given up to the counsels of a deceitful and desperately wicked heart, where the seed of all sin is lodged.

(2.) When the voice of the angel is not regarded, he leaves sinners under a judicial hardness of heart, so as all means for recovery shall prove utterly ineffectual. God strikes Pharaoh and the Egyptians with hardness of heart, because they would not hearken to the command of the Angel, requiring them to let Israel go. God says concerning the sinner that is disobedient to the voice of Christ, "He is joined to his idols, let him alone." My spirit shall let him alone, and cease to strive with him. My ministers, let him alone, or else go and preach him dead and lifeless, and senseless, Is. vi. Conscience let him alone, and cease to be a reprover. Rod and affliction, let him alone, allow him peace and prosperity in his way, until he and I meet together upon the back of death. Oh how dismal is the case of the sinner when it comes to this with it! "I would have purged them, and they would not be purged, therefore they shall not be purged from their filthiness any more, till I have caused my fury to rest upon them."

(3.) The curse of God mingles itself with every thing in a

man's lot, that will not obey the voice of the Angel that has the name of God in him. If the man have fulness and prosperity, the curse of God follows him there, so that his bread is baked, and his drink mingled with a curse, Deut. xxviii. 15; Mal. ii. 2, &c. If trouble and affliction be upon the man, the curse of God is in that cup also; his temporal troubles are but the beginnings of sorrows, the prelibation and foretastes of the cup of trembling, that he shall drink through eternity; they are but like some drops of rain to the full shower upon the wicked; God is determined to "rain snares, fire and brimstone; this shall be the portion of their cup."

(4.) Public desolation, and down-hewing of churches and nations, frequently follows upon disobedience to the voice of the Angel." "Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest I make thee desolate, a land not inhabited." Jerusalem and the temple, where are they now? what is become of the once famous church and nation of the Jews, God's peculiar people? Their land has *spued them out*, and the songs of the temple are turned into melancholy howlings. Why, what is the meaning of the heat of God's long continued anger against his ancient people for the space of seventeen hundred years? Why, the Angel here spoken of, "came unto his own, and his own received him not; he would have gathered them, as a hen doth her chickens under her wings, and they would not;" and therefore, "behold, their house and land is left unto them desolate."

In a word, to close this consideration according to the instructions that we have received from our great Lord, I proclaim from this high place of the city of God, "Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him," Is. iii. 11. Perhaps you may think our words are but wind; but remember that they will be a heavy wind to you ere all be done. It is not our word, but the word of God proclaimed by us, "Wo unto the wicked, it shall be ill with him."

(1.) It will be ill with you in the day of personal or public distress, when an angry and avenging God will meet you in the face, whatever hand you turn to: "Whither will ye fly from his presence?"

(2.) It will be ill with you in the day of death, when that grim messenger of the Lord of hosts is coming with that heavy message, "This day thy soul shall be taken from thee." Oh! what a comfortless creature is a Christless sinner in the day of death, when his riches, honours, profits, pleasures, lands, houses, relations, and all things that he adored, are bidding him a final farewell!

(3.) It shall go ill with you on the back of death. When

you begin to look into that awful and eternal world, what horror and confusion will seize you, when, instead of angels to carry you into Abraham's bosom, you shall meet legions of devils to hurry you down to the lake that burns with fire and brimstone!

(4.) It shall be ill with the wicked who refuse to hear the voice of Christ now, at the resurrection and the last judgment. You that refuse him a hearing now, you will hear him at that day, saying, "Bring forth these mine enemies who would not that I should reign over them, and slay them before me:" he will then "tear in pieces, when there is none to deliver."

(5.) It shall be ill with the wicked after the last judgment, through all eternity, when "the wicked shall be turned into hell, with all the nations that forget God:" there the smoke of your burning shall go up for ever and ever, and you shall there through eternity be crying with Dives, for a drop of water to cool the tip of your tongue, and it shall not be allowed. Oh! consider these things, ye that forget God, ye that stop the ear, and pull away the shoulder from the voice and cries of the Angel; let the terrors of God persuade you to consider what you are doing, before it be too late.

Consider, 6. To excite you to hearken to the voice and cries of the Angel, the advantage that shall redound to you, if you give him the hearing and obedience of faith. I shall instance in a few particulars among many.

1*st*, Give him the hearing of faith, and your souls shall live before the Lord. Remember, that before God you are all dead men, dead in law, "dead in trespasses and sins;" but that moment you hear and obey the voice of God's Angel, "your souls shall live," Is. lv. 3; John xi. 25: "I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." The man that gives the obedience of faith to Christ, begins to live a life of justification: being set free from the sentence of the broken law, he is vested with a law-fulfilling righteousness, by which he is able to answer every charge that the broken law has against him. He begins to live a life of sanctification: "the law of the Spirit of life in Jesus Christ, makes him free from the law of sin and death;" so that sin shall not have dominion over him, he not being under the law, but "under grace; being dead to the law" as a covenant "by the body of Christ, and married to a better husband, he brings forth fruit unto God." Hear the voice of the angel, and ye shall live a life of consolation, or comfort: "They that know the joyful sound, they shall walk in the light of the Lord's countenance, and in his name shall they rejoice all the day." Hear, and ye

shall live a life of communion with the Father, and with the Son; ye shall be "filled with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Hear the voice of the Angel, and your souls shall live a life of eternal and immediate vision and fruition of God in glory; for "he that believeth in the name of the Son of God, hath everlasting life, and shall never come into condemnation." Thus, if ye hear, your souls shall live. And oh! what a great matter is this? All things else are but trifles in comparison of this *one thing needful*—"What is a man profited, if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

2dly, Hear and obey the voice of the Angel, and not only shall thy soul live, O sinner, but thou shalt live in honour and preferment. God the Father has such a regard for that soul that obeys the voice of his Son Jesus Christ, that he allows them places among them that stand by; he prefers them, as it were, to posts of honour in his court, John xii. 26: "If any man serve me, him will my Father honour:" and the Angel of the covenant declares, that "he that honoureth me," by obeying my voice, "I will honour him; but he that despiseth me," and disobeys my voice, "shall be lightly esteemed." I will tell you of several pieces of honour designed for all that obey the voice of Christ, however much they may be dishonoured and contemned in the world.

(1.) Obey the Angel's voice, and ye shall be preferred to the dignity of being the sons of God. And, behold, what manner of honour is this, for the heirs of hell to have a name and a place in God's household, a name better than of sons and daughters among men. Ye shall be no more "aliens and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God." This honour have all that yield the obedience of faith to the voice of the Angel: John i. 12: "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name."

(2.) Obey the voice of the Angel, and ye shall be preferred to be royal consorts to the King of glory; ye shall be "the bride, the Lamb's wife," married to your Maker and Redeemer, "betrothed unto him in righteousness, faithfulness, and loving-kindness;" even betrothed unto him for ever. See to this purpose, Psal. xlv. 10, 11: "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house. So shall the King greatly desire thy beauty." Ver. 14, 15: "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work.—With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace."

(3.) By yielding the obedience of faith to the voice of the Angel, you shall be exalted to a princely honour and autho-

rity under the Prince of peace: Psal. xlv. 16: "Instead of thy fathers, shall be thy children, whom thou mayest make princes in all the earth." Believers are princes of Christ's creating: Rev. i. 5, 6: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God," &c. They are not born kings, but they are made kings by him who "raiseth the poor out of the dunghill, and sets them among princes, even among the princes of his people."

(4.) By yielding the obedience of faith to the voice of the Angel, ye shall not only be made kings, but priests unto God; and as such you shall be admitted to offer up sacrifices upon the golden altar before the throne; and through the much incense of the blood and intercession of the Angel, your sacrifices and offerings shall be accepted upon his altar. The priests under the law were admitted into the *holy of holies*; so are believers under the New Testament, Heb. x. 19: "Having, brethren, boldness, to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus." And as priests unto God, you shall live upon God's altar, and the great sacrifice of Christ's death; ye shall "eat his flesh, and drink his blood, which is meat indeed, and drink indeed."

(5.) By obeying the voice of the Angel, you shall be preferred to be secretaries of state to the great King: "Unto you it shall be given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." which is not given to others: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and unto them he will show his covenant." The Angel of God's presence, if you obey his voice, will show you the path of life, through which you shall go in and out, and find pasture. And when he is to bring desolating strokes on a land or church, he will readily give you some warning and intimation of it. When God has a mind to lay Sodom in ashes, he says, "Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do? When he has a mind to destroy the old world, he intimates it to righteous Noah, while he conceals it from the rest of the world; for "he being warned of God of things not seen as yet, prepared an ark for the saving of his house." And is not this a high dignity and honour conferred on them that obey the voice of the Angel? John xv. 15: "All things that I have heard of my Father, I have made known unto you."

(6.) By obeying the voice of the Angel, you come to be members of a royal society and corporation, and that even in this life. In Heb. xii. 22—24, we read of a society consisting of "God the Judge of all, Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, an innumerable company of angels, the general assembly and church of the first-born, and the spirits of just

men made perfect." Oh! what an honourable fraternity is here! Yet that moment you obey the voice of the Angel, you come to have your names enrolled and registered in this society, and may claim and plead all the immunities and privileges of it.

(7.) Obey the voice of the Angel, and you shall be honoured to have a dominion over death. Death has dominion over other men: but they that obey the voice of the Angel, by believing in his name, have dominion over death, and may insult it with a holy triumph, saying, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" It is a strange word the apostle has, 1 Cor. iii., at the close: the apostle is there making an inventory of the believer's jointure, and among other things he adds this article, *Death is yours.* As if he had said, I have taken this last enemy, of which you are afraid, a captive; I have bound him in chains, taken away his sting, and delivered him over into your hand. Or, Come set the foot of faith upon his neck, tread upon this lion and scorpion, for he cannot hurt you; yea, I deliver him up to you as a servant, yea, as a friend, to help you home to my company and fellowship. It is, indeed, hard to convince a believer, especially under the spirit of bondage, of the friendship of death. But I may compare the believer, in this case, to Moses: when Moses saw his rod turned into a serpent, he was afraid, and fled from it; but when God commanded him to take hold of it, he found, that, instead of hurting him, it was a harmless thing, and did him and the children of Israel much service: so death to a believer, at first sight, is like the rod turned to a serpent, it affrights him; but whenever it is handled by faith, at the command of the Angel, instead of being hurt, it is advantageous: *To die is gain.* As Moses's rod divided the waters, and made a passage for Israel through the deeps into Canaan; so death, in the hand of faith, opens the way to the promised land of glory. Death, to a believer, is like a messenger arresting a man for debt, after the debt is paid by his [surety.] Death, as God's messenger, arrests the believer, and carries him into the judgment-seat; but no sooner does the man appear there, but immediately Christ, the great Advocate in the midst of the throne, produces his discharge, and the debt-book of justice cancelled and cross-scored by his own blood. Thus shall it fare with the man at death, that obeys the Angel.

(8.) Obey the voice of the Angel that has his Father's name in him, and he will put honour upon you at the resurrection. "He will raise" you "up at the last day;" and this vile body of yours, that is such a clog to your spirits, "shall be made like unto the glorious body of Christ." You shall

be assessors with him in judgment: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world?" You shall sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel: "To him that overcometh will I give to sit with me upon my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father upon his throne." Perhaps now "the wicked never cease from troubling" you one way or another; thou art harassed by them in thy name, in thy means; thou endurest the "trial of cruel mockings" for obeying the voice of the Angel, as if thou wert only a hypocrite, and one that affected singularity; but be not discouraged; this blast will blow over; the day of thy complete redemption draweth near, and in the morning of that day the upright shall have dominion over them; when they shall be crying to the rocks and mountains to cover them, thou shalt be standing at the right hand of Christ, shining like the brightness of the firmament, yea, like the sun in the kingdom of the Father.

(9.) When the last judgment is over, if thou obey and follow the voice of the Angel, thou shalt enter the King's palace; with gladness and mirth on every side shalt thou be brought into it. Oh! when the great Judge has despatched the wicked, and all the nations that forget God, into hell, with the devil and his angels, he will return to the proper seat of his empire, and all his ransomed on every hand of him, with songs and everlasting joy upon their head, every one studying to outdo another in warbling out the Redeemer's praises: "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing, and dominion." "And so shall they be ever with the Lord."

Thus I have endeavoured to fulfil that commission among you, Is. iii. 10, 11: Go say to the wicked, It shall be ill with him; for the reward of his hands shall be given him; but say to the righteous, It shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings," in obeying the voice of the Angel. So that life or death is before you: if you obey the voice of the Angel, your souls shall live, and live in honour with the Lord, in time and through eternity: but if you will not obey the voice of the Angel, but go on to provoke him, he will not pardon your transgressions, but will pursue the quarrel of your disobedience to his voice to "the lowest hell," and through an endless eternity.

So much for the *fourth* thing in this use, which was to offer some considerations to excite you to obey the voice of Christ.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Obey his voice: for my name is in him.—EXOD. XXIII. 21.

THE ELEVENTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

BEFORE I go on to the *fifth* thing in this use, there are two or three things in the context, particularly ver. 20, which I would improve by way of motive, to excite you yet farther to obey the voice of the Angel of God's presence. "Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared."

The words were indeed immediately directed to Israel according to the flesh, with relation to their safe conduct through the howling wilderness to the earthly Canaan; but typically and ultimately they pointed at "Israel according to the spirit" under the New Testament, and Christ leading them through the wilderness of this world, till they come to the promised rest of glory on the other side of the Jordan of death: and as it was the interest of Israel to hearken to his voice, and obey it, if ever they expected to enter the earthly Canaan; so, in like manner, it is the duty and interest of all gospel-hearers, to hear and obey his voice, as ever they desire or expect to enter the threshold of glory.

And there are these few particulars here, which I would have you to consider:—

1. Hear the voice of the Angel, for he is God's send: "Behold, I send mine Angel before thee," &c. Oh, sirs! shall not the Sent of God get a hearing among the children of men? If but the king of Britain should send a messenger, a herald, to the inhabitants of this city, every one, I imagine, young and old, would prick up their ears to hear, and a speedy answer would be given to his commands: much more if he should send the prince-royal with his commands. Well, sirs, here is a send from "the King eternal and immortal," in whose hand is the breath of all living; and he has sent not Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, or any of the created angels, but he has sent his Son, his only Son, the Son of his bosom, the Son of his delights, who is "the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" and he has "sent him into the world, not to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved." Oh, then, shall we not hear and obey his voice?

2. Consider what a wonder it is, that ever he sent him upon

the business about which he is come. This is intimated in the word *behold:* "Behold, I send an Angel before my face." We find this title of admiration commonly prefixed to all the advertisements given concerning the coming of Christ; Is. xlii. 1: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold," &c. Zech. ix. 9: "Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee," &c. Mal. iii. 1: "The messenger of the covenant, whom ye seek, and whom ye delight in, behold, he shall come, saith the Lord of hosts." And whenever he appears actually upon the stage, the angels cry to the shepherds, Luke ii., "Behold, we bring you glad tidings of great joy." Oh! sirs, it is the greatest wonder that ever God wrought, even the chief of the ways of God, that ever he sent his Son in the nature of man upon the errand of our redemption, and that at the price of his own blood and death: "Behold, he comes with dyed garments, treading the wine press alone, speaking in righteousness, mighty to save;" and yet shall he not get a hearing when he is come?

3. Consider, that as the Captain of the Lord's host is he come, as he told Joshua: "Behold, I send an Angel before thee." You have a promise of him much to the same purpose, Is. lv. 4: "Behold, I have given him for a witness to the people, for a leader and commander to the people;" and Micah ii. at the close, "The breaker is come up before them —their King shall pass before them, and the Lord on the head of them. Oh! sirs, we have many enemies that lie in our way to glory, through the howling wilderness; "we wrestle not only with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers, and the rulers of the darkness of this world, with spiritual wickednesses in high places:" Well, here God has sent his own Son, as the Captain of our salvation, to fight all our battles, and accordingly to open our way to glory: "He spoiled principalities and powers on the cross;" and whenever that routed enemy, the old serpent, whose head he has bruised, begins to make an attack upon his soldiers, he is always ready to succour and assist, and to make their "bow to abide in its strength;" he is always standing at the right hand of the poor traveller to glory, ready to "uphold him with the right hand of his righteousness." Now, shall not soldiers, fighting their way to glory, obey the voice of their Captain, and such a one?

4. Hear and obey his voice, for he is Israel's keeper: "I send mine Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way." How soon would Israel, in the howling wilderness, have been consumed, if he had not been a keeper and watchman to them! He kept them from being swallowed up by the nations round them, by striking a terror upon their spirits; he kept them

from being devoured by the wild beasts of the wilderness, by laying a restraint upon them; he kept them from being consumed with the heat of the sun, by spreading a canopy of a cloud over the camp; he kept them from the injury of the night by raising a pillar of fire in the midst of them; he kept them from starving with hunger, by making the heavens to rain down manna about their tents; he kept them from perishing with drought, by making the rock, that is, the waters of the rock, to follow them through all the turns of their way. Thus he kept Israel in their way. And all this was but a shadow of what he is to us now under the New Testament, if we but saw him by the eye of faith; hence is that promise, with respect to the church under the New Testament, Is. iv. 5, 6: "The Lord shall create upon every dwelling-place of mount Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud and smoke by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night; for upon all the glory there shall be a defence. And there shall be a tabernacle for a shadow in the day-time from the heat, and for a place of refuge, and for a covert from the storm and from the rain." Hence Peter tells us, that we are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." Shall not all this engage us to hear his voice?

5. Hear and obey the voice of the Angel, for his errand is to lead and guide you in the right way: "He shall keep you in the way, and bring you to the place of rest." O, sirs, there are many by-ways in the wilderness, many turns in the road to glory, that ye know not; but hearken to and obey the voice of the Angel, for "he brings the blind by a way they know not, and in paths which they have not known; he is the Shepherd of Israel, that leads Joseph like a flock," Psal. lxxx. 1, and Psal. lxxviii. last verse: "He fed them according to the integrity of his heart: and guided them by the skilfulness of his hands." See the way described in which he leads his Israel to glory, Is. xxxv. 8: "A high-way shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called the way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those; the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein." Obey his voice, then, as ever you expect to be led by the right way, till you come to the city of habitation, "whose builder and maker is God."

6. To excite you to obey the voice of the Angel, will you consider whither he leads those that follow and obey him here? we are told that it is "a place prepared of God;" that is, to Canaan in the type, but to heaven and glory in the antitype. The place that the Angel leads you to, if you obey his voice, is described variously in scripture. Sometimes called a "house,

and a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens; a house of many mansions," where there is lodging for all the innumerable inhabitants. Sometimes it is called "a city that hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God, the gates of which are of pearls, the streets of it are of pure gold, and transparent glass." Sometimes called "a kingdom:" "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed to me." And in this kingdom all the inhabitants are crowned kings; they wear a crown of glory, life, and righteousness, which fadeth not away; and they have thrones to sit upon, yea, they sit with Christ upon his throne. Sometimes it is called "an inheritance, and an inheritance that is incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

If you ask farther, what sort of a place it is? I answer, (1.) It is a place of life, for there is no death there; it is properly the land of the living, and therefore commonly called *everlasting life*. (2.) A place of health, for there is no noxious diseases enter there: "The inhabitant shall not say, I am sick," &c. (3.) It is a place of light, for there is no darkness there, either of desertion, temptation, or affliction: "The Lord God and the Lamb are the light of the place." There that promise shall be fully accomplished: "The Lord shall be thy everlasting light, and thy God thy glory." (4.) It is a place of rest: "There remaineth a rest for God's people. They shall enter into peace: they shall rest in their beds, each one walking in his uprightness." No disturbance there through eternity from sin, Satan, or a wicked world. (5.) A place of joy and pleasure: "In thy presence there is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand are pleasures for evermore." All the inhabitants "come to it with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads, and sorrow and sighing shall for ever flee away." (6.) A place of plenty, no pinching wants either in soul or body; there they are in the midst of all fulness," &c. (7.) It is a place of immediate vision and fruition of the Lord: John xvii. 24: "Father, I will that these whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me." (8.) It is a lasting and everlasting place, a kingdom that endureth for ever. Eternity is the consummation of the miseries of the wicked, and the consummation of the happiness of the ransomed in glory; it "fadeth not away." (9.) It is a prepared place, as you see in the text; so it is called in the last sentence, Matth. xxv. 34: "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Quest. How is this place prepared for these that follow and obey the voice of the Angel?

Answ. (1.) It is prepared by an eternal decree, by which God ordained it for you, and you for it; for he hath "chosen us to salvation, predestinated us unto the adoption of children:" and whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (2.) It is prepared by a large price or purchase paid for it, not of silver or gold, or such corruptible things, but by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, as of a Lamb without spot; therefore heaven is called a *purchased inheritance.* (3.) It is prepared and laid up by an inviolable charter, the covenant and promise of God, which is confirmed by the oath of God, and the blood of the Son, &c. (4.) It is prepared by the resurrection and ascension of Christ into heaven, where he appears as our forerunner and representative, for *he is for us*, or in our name, *entered:* hence is that [declaration] of Christ to his drooping disciples, John xiv. 2: "I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also."

Now, put all these things together, and see if there be not as much in this verse, as may excite and engage a rational soul to comply with this duty I am urging upon you; namely, to obey the voice of Christ, the great Angel of God's presence: why, he is sent to go before you, to keep you in the way, and to bring you to the place that God has prepared for all that obey him.

THE NAME OF GOD GLORIFIED IN CHRIST.

Obey his voice: for my name is in him.—Exod. xxiii. 21.

THE TWELFTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I am still upon an exhortation to obey the voice of Christ: I have shown you *first*, what we are to understand by the *voice* of Christ, and how it is conveyed to us. *2dly*, I endeavoured to show what his voice is to the present generation, and particularly to us in this place. *3dly*, What it is to

obey his voice. *4thly*, I endeavoured by several motives to excite you to obey his voice. I go on now to

The *fifth* thing in handling this branch of the exhortation, which was, to offer some characters of those that have complied with this exhortation. Some, perhaps, after all they have heard, may put the question, How shall a person be satisfied in their own minds, that they are among that number, who yield the obedience of faith to the voice of Christ? I answer, If ever you have heard the voice of the Angel, Jesus Christ, who has the name, and nature, and voice of God in him, you have felt something of a divine power coming along with it to your souls; for "the voice of the Lord is powerful, the voice of the Lord is full of majesty," Psal. xxix.: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation," says Paul, Rom. i. 16. The word which is the voice of Christ is called "the rod of his strength," Psal. cx. 2; and when he himself comes in it, and with it, a "willing people" is made "in a day of his power."

Quest. What is that power that accompanies the voice of Christ in his word?

Answ. 1. It has a killing power coming along with it, especially his voice from mount Sinai: "When the commandment came," says Paul, "sin revived, and I died." The man was so full of himself, and of his own righteousness, that he thought himself *alive without the law; touching the law* he imagined himself to be *blameless;* like Laodicea, he fancied himself "rich and increased with goods, and stood in need of nothing;" but whenever he heard the voice of Christ, he is struck to the ground, and all his fine airy imaginations about his own righteousness, by the law, falls to the ground; he sees himself to be a dead man, and what things were gain to him before, these he counts loss and dung now." Did you ever find this self-killing power of the voice of Christ from mount Sinai? for if proud self was never battered down by the hammer of the law, which breaks the rock in pieces, you never yet heard the voice of Christ. You know before ever Israel cried for a Mediator between God and them, they got such a hearing of the voice of the Angel, as made the whole camp of six hundred thousand to fall a-quaking: "The law is our schoolmaster, to lead us unto Christ, that we may be justified by faith;" not that the law, in itself, reveals Christ, but it prepares the soul for the revelation of him in the gospel. I do not limit adorable sovereignty in his way of working; but so much of law work is necessary, as to shake the soul out of all its lying refuges, and created confidences that it may betake itself to Christ, and to him alone, for righteousness and life.

2. The voice of Christ, where it has been heard in a saving manner, has had a quickening power: John v. 25: "The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live. Are not my words spirit and life?" says the Angel, with the name of God in him, John vi.: "The Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus," comes in and with the word of the gospel, which reveals Christ to the soul, and "makes it free from the law of sin and death," Rom. viii. 2. The law, considered as a covenant, is a law of sin and death to the poor soul while under it. It is a law of sin, because, "the strength of sin is the law;" sin has the dominion over the man, and is in its full power, while he is cleaving to the law as a husband; sin has dominion over him, because he is not under grace, but under the law. And then the law, considered as a covenant, is not only the law of sin, but of death, because it binds over the man to undergo the penalty; however he may work and weary himself in the greatness of his way, to make out a title to life by his obedience and works, yet he being weak to yield the obedience that the law requires, which must be every way perfect, it becomes a "law of death" to him, the penalty takes place upon him, "The soul that sinneth shall die." But now the law or power of the Spirit of life, which is in the word or voice of Christ; makes a man free from this law of sin and death; it makes a man fly from the law as a covenant, to him who is "The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" and then the man becomes a living man; he reckons that he is "dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ," and cries with David, "I shall not die, but live, and discover the works of the Lord," and the wonders of his grace, and love through Christ unto my soul. "I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me," &c. Alas! may some poor soul say, I find so much deadness in my heart, that I am afraid I never heard the quickening voice of Christ to this day. *Answ.* It is just the fruit of the voice of Christ to discover, that thou hast no life, no strength, no righteousness, no goodness in thyself; but to see, though thou be legally and spiritually dead in thyself, yet your life is in the Son, it is "hid with Christ in God." Oh! say you, if my life were hid there, all would be right; but I cannot think that I can be so dead and lifeless, and yet have my life hid in Christ. *Answ.* Canst thou say before God, that thy life is so much bound up in Christ, and that thou seest such an absolute need of Christ, thou canst neither live nor die without him? I see myself so unrighteous and guilty before God, that if I get not him for the Lord my righteousness, I am a dead man, a dead woman, through eternity. If this be the case,

surely in the Lord hast thou righteousness and strength;" and therefore thou "shalt not die but live;" the voice of the Angel has quickened thy soul to fly to him.

3. The voice of Christ has an enlightening power with it, for "the entrance of his word gives light." The word of the Lord is powerful, "enlightening the eyes." At the same time that Christ unstops the deaf ear, so as to hear his voice, he opens the blind eyes of the sinner also, to behold his glory and the glory of God in him. We are told, Rev. i. that John, whenever he heard the voice of Christ, saying, "I am Alpha, and Omega, the first and the last," immediately turned to hear the voice of him that spake to him, and he "saw one like unto the Son of man, clothed with a garment down to the foot." When Christ spoke to Paul in his way going to Damascus, he at the same time revealed himself to him: "It pleased God to reveal his Son in me." And therefore try yourselves by this. Have you ever seen an incarnate God? has "the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus Christ, shined into your hearts?" Oh! say you, how shall I know if ever that divine light did enter with the voice of Christ into my soul? I answer, You may know it by this, that whenever this light is withheld, you will be troubled; Psal. xxx. 7: "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled. I go mourning without the sun." Your aim and design in reading, hearing, praying, or any other duty, will be to get a new beam of that "light of life: Psal. xxvii. 4: "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may behold the beauty of the Lord, and inquire after him in his temple." And you will wait for it "as they that wait for the morning, yea, more than they that wait for the morning." And when it comes from his countenance, your hearts will be glad, and more glad than when corn, wine, and oil, abound.

4. The voice of Christ has a soul-turning and converting power in it. This is the ordinary way the efficacy and power of Christ in the gospel is expressed, Psal. xix. 7. It *converts the soul*, or it turns the sinner "from darkness unto light, from the power of Satan unto the living God." Whenever the Lord's voice is carried in upon the heart of backsliding Israel; whenever he says, "Return, thou backsliding Israel," immediately they turn to him, saying, "Behold, we come unto thee, for thou art the Lord our God." The whole soul gets a turn by the power of the voice of Christ. The understanding is turned from darkness to light, from ignorance to a saving uptaking of the things of God. The will is turned from enmity to a voluntary subjection to the Lord: Psal. cx. 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The heart is turned from its rockiness and obstinacy to a blessed yield-

ing to the will of God, therefore called a *heart of flesh*. The conscience is turned from its former security and searedness, to act as God's deputy, and to rebuke for every swerving from the holy law. The affections, such as the love, delight, desire, and joy of the soul, are turned from following after vanity, to centre in Christ and God in him, as the only object of delight and joy, so as the man does not any longer set his affection on things below, but on things above. In short, the man is turned from calling "God a liar," to set to his seal that *God is true*. And with this turn of the heart and soul, there is a turn of all the members of the body, and of the whole conversation. The eyes that were *full of adultery*, and fed themselves with *beholding vanity*, now delight in reading the word of God, and in beholding of his works. The ears that were delighted with hearing idle stories and profane songs, are now delighted in hearing the word of God. The tongue that was *set on fire of hell*, and that talked of vanity, is now employed in prayer and praise, and in commending Christ, and "speaking things that are good, for the use of edifying." The feet that were swift to run the devil's errands, are now employed in carrying the man to the house of God, to the ordinances of his appointment, where his soul may get edification and nourishment. Thus, I say, the voice of the Angel Christ has a turning and converting power in it.

5. The voice of Christ has a sanctifying and sin-killing power: Psal. cvii. 20: "He sent forth his word, and healed them." The dominion of sin is broken by the power of the voice of Christ; for this is the end of every manifestation of the Son of God, in the flesh, in the word or Spirit, to "destroy the works of the devil," and particularly to destroy the reign of sin, which is the first-born of the devil.

Object. Alas! if this be so, I am afraid I never yet heard the voice of Christ in me; for I never found unbelief, enmity, carnality, pride, and other evils, so much prevail against me, as since I began to lay things to heart.

Answ. The very feeling of these heart plagues, or a sense of them, is the fruit of the light or power of the word or voice of Christ in the heart. It is the work of the Spirit and voice of Christ to "convince of sin, and to pierce to the dividing asunder of joints and marrow," and to humble and soften the soul so, as that it may give employment to Christ the great Physician. See how Paul groans under the remains of a body of sin; Rom. vii. 24: "O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death!"

6. If the power of the Angel's voice has reached thy heart,

thou hast been awed with the majesty, and charmed with the melody of it.

1*st*, You have been awed with the majesty of his voice; and no wonder, for the *name of God is in him*, and the voice of the Angel, is the voice of God, and therefore his voice must be full of divine majesty, and this brings the awe and fear of God into the heart: hence believers are sometimes described to be such as "tremble at his word," and tremble at his dispensations: "My flesh trembleth because of thee, and I am afraid of thy judgments." Alas! the generality of gospel-hearers in our day, are no more moved, either with the voice of Christ in his word, or yet in his rod, than the smith's anvil is with the beating of the hammer; so that we may take up Isaiah's complaint, Is. xxvi. 11: "Lord, when thy hand is lifted up, they will not see, they will not behold the majesty of the Lord; but they shall see." It is otherwise with those that have effectually heard the voice of Christ; they are, I say, awed with the majesty of his voice

2*dly*, They are not only awed with the majesty, but charmed with the melody of his voice. His voice is the voice of the charmer, Psal. lviii. It has such a charming captivating quality, that the dead live when they hear it; the lips of them that are asleep begin to speak, the lame leap like a hart, and the tongue of the dumb begin to sing. I may appeal to the experience of all that know the voice of Christ, for the truth of this. Hence it is that his sheep hear his voice, and at the hearing of it they follow him. If they hear him inviting them to follow him in prayer, meditation, Christian conference, or in any ordinance of his worship, saying, "Come with me from Lebanon, my sister, my spouse," immediately their soul echoes, "Behold, I come.—One day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I had rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than dwell in the tents of sin." If they hear his voice calling them to go into the fire or water for him, they will be ready to say with Paul, "I am ready not to be bound only, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus." If they hear him calling them to any piece of work, they will be ready to say, Lord, command what thou wilt, only give strength to obey: "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou hast enlarged my heart.—I will go in the strength of the Lord, making mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." If they hear his voice inviting them to come away to glory to him through death, they will be ready to say with David, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me;" or with Paul,

"To me to live is Christ, and to die is gain.—I desire to be dissolved, and to be with Christ, which is far better."

Object. If this be a mark of them that have heard and felt the power of the voice of Christ, I am afraid of myself; for the thoughts of death are a terror to me.

Answ. Death, or the dissolution of nature, is indeed a terror to nature; and I own, that the best of the saints shrink at it, under this consideration: but will you answer me this question? Does not the thoughts of being with the Lord, and of "seeing him as he is," and the thoughts of perfect freedom from a weary body of sin and death, and of being "perfectly like him" in holiness, sometimes sweeten the thoughts of death, and reconcile thy heart to it? If so, it is an evidence that thou hast heard the voice of Christ, and that ere long thou shalt be among that ransomed company, who are singing his praises in the higher house.

The *last* thing proposed in this use, was to conclude with a few words of advice, in order to your obeying the voice of the Angel who bears his Father's name. I only mention these following:—

1. See that you be well acquainted with the name of God as it is set forth in him, for this is the very ground and reason of all obedience to him, *Obey his voice, for my name is in him:* we will yield but a sorry obedience, if we do not take up a God in Christ. Study to take up the being, the perfections, and glory of God as displayed in him; for it is this that makes every knee to bow, and every tongue to confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord.

2. If you would yield acceptable obedience to the voice of the Angel, you must take up God in him as your God; not only your creating God, and your preserving God, but as your redeeming God, your God by a new covenant grant, where he has said, "I am the Lord thy God;" for the faith of this is the foundation of all acceptable obedience, as your Catechism well instructs you, in that question, 'What doth the preface to the ten commandments teach us? It teacheth us, that because God is the Lord, and our God, and Redeemer, therefore we are bound to keep all his commandments.' Never rest, then, till you know and acknowledge him as your God in Christ, and so your obedience will go upon the right footing, for "without" this "faith, it is impossible to please God;" and "whatsoever is not of faith, is sin." Believe in him as your pardoning, pitying, justifying, sanctifying, supplying, and saving God, and this will make his yoke easy, and his burden light.

3. Make constant use, by faith, of the strength of the Angel, for your assistance in work and warfare, and of his

righteousness for acceptance. This was David's way; "I will go in the strength of the Lord," and when I have done so, "I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." We must work by a foreign strength, and be accepted upon a borrowed or imputed righteousness; and in this way it is, that we "come up from the wilderness, leaning upon the Beloved."

4. Shake yourselves loose of every thing, that would encumber you in obeying the voice of the Angel: Heb. xii. 1, 2: "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus," &c. "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off; if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee;" that is, if any lust or idol be in thy heart, be it the lust of covetousness, the lust of uncleanness, the lust of envy, the lust of revenge, pride, worldliness, or whatever it be, though as dear as a right hand, or a right eye, away with it, that you may obey and follow the voice of the Angel. "Mortify the deeds of the body:—for if we live after the flesh, we shall die; but if we through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, we shall live."

5. Let your obedience to the voice of the Angel be absolute and unreserved; beware of hiding any idol with which he requires you to part; for "if we regard iniquity in our hearts, the Lord will not hear us." And beware of a partial obedience to the Angel, doing one thing, and neglecting another; for he will not be obeyed by halves. It is true, indeed, it is impossible to yield a perfect and sinless obedience to him, but we must aim at it through his grace, by a regard to every part of his revealed will: "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments." It is given as the character of Zacharias and Elizabeth, that "they walked in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, blameless." Christ glories in an upright Christian, as a man glories in the fruit trees of his garden. How does he upbraid the devil with Job's integrity? "Hast thou considered my servant Job, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil?"

6. Be diligent in reading the scriptures, and in hearing of the word preached, for it is by the word that the voice and mind of the Angel is known and understood. Hide his word in your hearts, that you may not sin against him; attend to it as a "light shining in a dark place;" let it be to you as the pillar of fire and cloud to Israel; and follow no man farther than he is a follower of Christ; for the Angel has ordered us to call no man father or master in this sense.

7. Keep your eyes upon him as your guide and pattern:

"He that saith he abideth in him, ought himself also so to walk, even as he walked." He has not only chalked out our way of obedience in his word, but he has trod the path before us, and so "left us an example, that we should follow his steps." And, in subordination to him, eye the footsteps of the flock, that have followed the Lamb to glory, and keep company with them that are endeavouring in sincerity to obey his voice, and to follow him; for "he that walketh with the wise, shall be wise."

8. Pluck up your spirits, put on courage and resolution to face all opposition in following the voice of the Angel; resolve to "resist, even unto blood, striving against sin." Men will think it strange, that you do not walk with them "according to the course of this world and the lusts of the flesh," and they will hate you, they will brand you with hypocrisy and singularity, they will oppose you in your way, they will persecute you in your name, in your relations, in your worldly interests: but "let none of these things move you, neither account your life dear, that you may finish your course with joy;" let this be always *your rejoicing*, amidst all the storms that may blow from heaven, earth, or hell, even "the testimony of your conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, you have had your conversation in the world."

9. Let your obedience to him be voluntary and sure: he does not love to see his followers drooping and hanging their heads; no, he delighted to do his Father's will, and to fulfil the hard task of service to his Father for our redemption, and he expects that we should be joyful and voluntary in our service to him. This is the way to get frequent meetings of love with him: "He meeteth him that rejoiceth to work righteousness, who remembereth him in his ways." Hence are these repeated calls to his followers to yield cheerful obedience: "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart. Rejoice evermore: and again I say, Rejoice."

10. *Lastly*, Let your obedience to the Angel of God be constant; for "he that endureth to the end shall be saved.—The righteous holdeth on his way. Be ye constant, and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labour shall not be in vain in the Lord."

SERMON XXIX.

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID RUINED BY MAN, AND REARED UP BY THE MIGHTY GOD.*

Behold the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom, and I will destroy it from off the face of the earth; saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord. For lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth. All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us. In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.—AMOS IX. 8—11.

THE FIRST SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

IN these verses which I have read, we have a mixture of judgment and mercy, judgment and wrath ushering in and paving the way to mercy; he that "planteth the heavens, and lays the foundations of the earth, and who buildeth his stories in the heavens," (as in the preceding part of the chapter,) he pulls down the Jewish church, that he may raise up one more glorious and beautiful in its room. This prophet Amos was but of a mean extraction and original, among the herdmen of Tekoa, as you will find in the beginning of his prophecy: however, that God who took David from following the ewes with young, and set him on the throne to sway the sceptre of Israel, took a poor herdman from following his flock, and commands him to go and deliver his mind and message to the king, to the court, to the nobles, to the priests, and to the people of Israel. If a man carry God's commission, whatever be his birth or pedigree, or whatever has been his employment, he is worthy of reception and entertainment. All the sons of men are before God as a company of clay vessels, and he "makes one to honour, and another to dishonour," and "does whatever he pleases in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." What though "he take the poor from the dunghill, and set him among princes," if it be his pleasure? He appeared upon the stage in a very

* Three Discourses, the first and second preached at Edinburgh, November, 1735; and the third at Kinross, February 17, 1736, at the opening of the Presbytery of the Associate ministers there.

degenerate day: however, like a faithful watchman, he sets the trumpet to his mouth, and declares to the house of Judah and Israel their abominations: and although he was prohibited and discharged to come near the king's court and chapel, yet, in obedience to him that sent him, he "lifts up his voice like a trumpet."

In the verses which I have read, we may take notice of these few particulars following:—

1. We have the designation that the prophet Amos, by God's commission, gives to the kingdom of Israel; you see it in the beginning of ver. 8, he calls them a *sinful kingdom*. They were "a people laden with iniquity, a seed of evil doers, children that had corrupted themselves; they had departed from God," departed from the purity of that worship which God had appointed them to observe at the temple of Jerusalem, and, in room thereof, they had erected their idolatrous calves at Dan and Bethel; yea, many of them, the generality and body of the nation, except it was some seven thousand or so, had all bowed the knee to Baal, and run after the example of their corrupt kings and priests; they were, indeed, a *sinful kingdom*. And, alas! may not the same motto be written upon us in the land in which we live? I could make this evident in many particulars. We are laden with sin, we have corrupted our ways like them; they brake God's covenant, and so have we; they countenanced idolatry and superstition, and went after many vile abominations; they joined themselves in a covenant with hell, and sacrificed unto devils; and I have heard that witchcrafts and devilish arts are also performed in this city. Oh, what a load of sin is lying on the land! What dreadful perjury and apostacy! what dreadful profanation of the Lord's day and name is to be found among us! The cry of our sins hath gone up to heaven, and they are blind that do not see a frowning God upon the account of these things. But then,

2. Another thing we may notice here, is, an advertisement that the prophet Amos gives to this "sinful kingdom;" why, says he, *the eyes of the Lord are upon it*. It is very likely there was a generation of men among them, as there is among ourselves at this day, who, if they do not say it with their mouths, yet say it in their hearts, and say it in their practice; the language of their way and walk is, "God does not see, neither does the God of Jacob regard us: The Lord has forsaken the earth, and the Lord seeth not;" he neither takes notice of our good or evil, neither will he require it. But do not mistake it, says the prophet, you will find it otherwise; *The eyes of the Lord are upon the sinful kingdom*, the sinful rulers, prophets, priests, and inhabitants of the land;

"His eyes do see, and his eyelids try the children of men." The adulterer, and other sinners of that kind, that perpetrate sin in secret, seek the twilight; and when they do so, they say, "No eye shall see us:" but, sirs, remember, that "darkness and light are alike to God, the night shines as the day before him." "Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him? saith the Lord. He discovers deep things out of darkness, and brings out to light the shadows of death." And, therefore, wherever you are, whatever you are about, remember Hagar's confession of faith, "Thou, God, seest me." Study to remember, that the eye of an all-seeing God follows you wherever you go, yea, shines into the very bottom of your soul. Though perhaps you may fancy with yourselves, that your secret wickednesses are overlooked, and that your old sins are out of mind; they are not out of mind with God, he knows them, and will bring them to light. All the wicked works of darkness that are perpetrated in this city, he will discover and bring them to light one day before men and angels; "he will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." Some men's behaviour, now-a-days, says, that there is not a God to bring them to an account. For the Lord's sake, study to have the impression of an all-seeing God upon you wherever you go; for *the eyes of the Lord God are upon the sinful kingdom.—Verily, there is a God that judgeth in the earth.*

3. We may notice here God's purpose and resolution with reference to the sinful kingdom, what he has a mind to do with it; says the Lord, *I will destroy it from off the face of the earth.* Sinners, when there are multitudes of them joined together, fancy themselves secure, especially when they have men of power and authority on their side; but it is as easy for God to destroy whole kingdoms, as to destroy one particular person. There is no safety in the way of multitudes; for what are all multitudes before the great God, but "as the drop of a bucket, and are accounted as the small dust of the balance?" *I will destroy them*, saith the Lord, *from off the face of the earth.* They have made the earth to groan, the creation to groan, under the weight of their sins: Well, I will rid the very earth of such a burden, says God: "The Lord is a man of war, the Lord is his name;" and when he "whets his glittering sword, when his hand takes hold on judgment," what will he do with his enemies? "He will render tribulation and anguish unto every soul of man that doth evil:" yea, he will make clean work of great and populous nations and families; high and low must bow when he arises to judgment. When he *whets his sword*, the wicked shall perish, "his enemies shall be as the fat of lambs, into smoke shall they consume away."

Sirs, God is a strong party; and you that are running upon the thick bosses of his buckler, had need to consider what you are doing. "Who will set the briers and thorns in battle against me? I will go through them, I will consume them together. Who can dwell with devouring fire? who can abide with everlasting burnings?" *I will destroy them from off the face of the earth.* A heavy sentence from a God of mercy! How averse is he to bring matters to that extremity of destroying a people from off the face of the earth? It is just like the rending of his bowels to proceed to such severity: Hos. xi. 8: "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? mine heart is turned within me, my repentings are kindled together." He tries all ways and means imaginable to reclaim a sinful people, before he comes this length: but when they will not be reclaimed, and when they will not regard the offers of his mercy, will not be led to repentance, what can remain but fiery wrath which shall devour his enemies? Sirs, do not think that the mercy of God will save you, when you spurn at the bowels of divine mercy, while you tread and trample upon it by unbelief. God's mercy runs in a certain channel, and out of that it is not to be found. If you ask me, What is that channel? I answer, It is the blood and satisfaction of Jesus: and, therefore, if ever you should share of mercy, and avoid the judgments here threatened, you must come to the blood of sprinkling. But then,

4. We may notice the limitation of this awful sentence: "I will destroy them," &c. "saving that I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord God." The promised seed of the woman, which was to bruise the head of the serpent; the promised seed of Abraham, in whom all the nations of the earth were to be blessed, was not yet come; and therefore a part of the natural seed of Abraham must be preserved, in order to the production of that promised seed, through whom the blessings of heaven were to be conveyed to the sons of men. Or by *the house of Jacob* we are to understand the godly remnant, that adhered to the Lord, and to his worship, his laws, institutions, and ordinances, in that degenerate age; they that followed the example of Jacob, and their other worthy ancestors, in wrestling with God, especially in that dark and cloudy day: says the prophet, *I will not utterly destroy them.* In the worst of times, God has always a remnant that worship and serve him, and that cleave to his ways; as I was observing already, he had his "seven thousand in Israel, that had not bowed the knee unto Baal?" and whatever

comes of the rest of the world, God will take care of them. And this you will see farther illustrated in verse 9. Where,

5. We have an account of God's management with respect to that remnant: *For, lo, I will command, and I will sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain thereof fall to the earth.* There is an allusion here to a husbandman, who, when he sifts his corn in the sieve, shakes it, and tosses it hither and thither, not to destroy it, but to preserve and purify it, and to separate betwixt the good corn and the chaff; but all the time that the husbandman is sifting the corn, he has the sieve fast in his hand, and he manages the sieve for the good of the corn. Just so here, God's remnant are his good corn, and the wicked are the chaff; and he will send a winnowing and sifting wind into the barn of the visible church, and will shake his remnant; yet he will take care of them, he has them in his hand, "All his saints are in thy hand," Deut. xxxiii. 3. "No man shall pluck them out of my hand, nor out of my Father's hand," says our blessed Lord; and not a grain shall fall to the ground, or be lost. There is a particular providence of God exercised about his own people; his eye is set upon them for good; and the hand of his providence manages the great field of the creation in a subserviency to his own glory, and to their good: "He rides in the heavens for the help of his people, and in his excellency on the skies; he is the shield of their help, and the sword of their excellency." But then,

6. We are here told what will become of the chaff, ver. 10. "All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword, which say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us." It is a strange thing that the great Lord should lay claim to them as his people, though they were a sinful people; he would fain lay claim to them, if they would lay claim to him. But this is an aggravation of their sin, that they are his professing people, and yet they rebel against him; it is such a heightening aggravation of their sin, that he appeals to the very heavens against them, Is. i. 2: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth: I have nourished and brought up children, yet they have rebelled against me." *All the sinners of my people shall die by the sword. All the sinners of my people!* Certainly this is not to be understood absolutely, or else no flesh should be spared; "for all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God:" but you see what sinners are intended, in the latter clause of ver. 10: *That say, The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us.* They promised themselves impunity in their way, and "said within their hearts," and perhaps

with their tongues too, "We shall have peace, though we walk after the imaginations of our own hearts." And is there not a set of people in the land, and I fear too many of them in this city, who speak the same language? Let God say what he will by his word, let him say what he will by his providence, let ministers and private Christians testify against them ever so much, and warn them of their sins, and of the judgments of God they are bringing on themselves and the land; yet they say, *The evil shall not overtake nor prevent us;* we will go on and prosper; we will "add drunkenness to our thirst: To-morrow shall be as this day, and much more abundant." Some are sinning with a high hand against the great God; but their high hand will fall, when God lifts his hand; they may *deal proudly*, but God will be *above them:* let them do their utmost, "the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of man shall be bowed down, and the Lord alone shall be exalted," although it be to their ruin and destruction. I would have you who promise yourselves impunity in your evil ways to remember, that though "sentence against an evil work be not speedily executed," yet when the time of execution comes, the severity of the stroke will make a recompense sufficient for the delay of it; God's hand is heavy when it is laid on, and that you will find to your cost. "Consider this, ye that forget God." Consider this, ye who, to the offence of all sober and serious Christians, are following these obscene spectacles and comedies that are set up in this place, and you who, in your night-revellings, adventure to profane the holy word and worship of God in the open streets. You may imagine that evil shall not overtake you: but whether shall God's word or yours hold good? You say, "You shall have peace, though you" thus insult the great God, and "add drunkenness to thirst;" but God says, "There is no peace to the wicked."

But now follows another scene; a scene of mercy is opened up in ver. 11: *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David, that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.*

Where briefly we may notice, 1*st*, The designation that God gives to his church, particularly in the New Testament church; it is called *the tabernacle of David.* I think it is so called, with an allusion to the tabernacle that was made by Moses in the wilderness, which was a badge of God's particular presence among that people: it was a kind of portable thing that they carried about with them from one place to another, till they came to Canaan; and then it was set in the place which God had appointed for it in the temple of Jerusalem. God's militant church in the world is a kind of move-

able thing: "The tabernacle of God is with men," but it is not always fixed in one particular place; sometimes he sees meet to remove his tabernacle, as the tabernacle was removed of old from one place to another: sometimes he removes it from one nation to another; hence Christ tells the Jews, that "the kingdom of God should be taken from them, and given to a nation that would make a better use of it. Sirs, God's tabernacle has been pitched among us for a long time; but it has met with coarse handling, many foul hands have been admitted to approach it. None but those that were *called of God* were allowed to touch the tabernacle; but, alas! how many are there in our day who intrude upon tabernacle work, that never had the call of God, or his people, unto that service! And this I look upon, among other things, to be one of the many melancholy signs of God's removing his tabernacle from among us. Little of God, little of his glory, is to be seen, as in former times: the cloud of his presence is departed. But then the tabernacle is here called *the tabernacle of David.* David had great pleasure in God's tabernacle: "How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts? One day in thy courts is better than a thousand: I would rather be a door-keeper in the house of my God, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Alas! this is not the spirit of the generality now-a-days; many love rather to be in a tavern than in the tabernacle. But by David here, we are not to understand David personally, but David typically, the *Son of David;* he in whom David's family, David's throne, and David's power, were perpetuated. And then it is called *the tabernacle of David,* because it is his property. The church is Christ's property; he bought her at a dear rate, even with the price of his precious blood; she is his dwelling-place, and he has no other dwelling upon earth but his church: he says of Zion, where the tabernacle was placed, "This is my rest for ever: here will I dwell, for I have desired it," Psal. cxxxii. 14.

2*dly*, We may notice the present case of the tabernacle of David; it is *fallen*, there are *breaches* made upon it, and it is in a *ruinous* condition. "The boar of the wood had wasted it, the wild beasts of the forest had devoured it:" the laws of the temple had been violated and profaned, as they are in our day: God, in his righteous judgment, had let robbers into it, that had spoiled it: "Who gave Jacob to the spoil and Israel to the robbers? He against whom they had sinned." Civil robbers, ecclesiastical robbers, break in upon his vineyard, and "spoil the tender grapes and vines," instead of preserving them; they carry away the rights of the people of God, instead of patronising and defending them. The typical taber-

nacle of David fell when Christ rose from the dead; the Mosaic economy was then unhinged, giving way to the New Testament church.

3*dly*, We have a promise here of rebuilding David's tabernacle: *I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.* We read of great furniture laid into the hand of Christ, of great gifts bestowed upon our Emmanuel. But for what end? It was for building a house for God to dwell in among the sons of men: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, he received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among us." Christ laid the foundation of a new tabernacle in his blood, and he ascended up to heaven, and sat down upon the throne, in order to pursue that great end, to raise up a spiritual temple for himself and his Father to dwell in; for from eternity "he rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men." Now, the tabernacle of David was fallen, but "the man whose name is the BRANCH, he comes out of his place, he builds the temple of the Lord, and he shall bear the glory thereof." But then,

4*thly*, That which I would have you particularly to notice is, the time or season when this is to be done; it is *in that day*, when the Lord *destroys the sinful kingdom from off the face of the earth;—that day* when he *sifts the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve;—that day*, when *the sinners of* his *people shall die by the sword. In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David.*

From this connexion I only take notice of this observation, and so shall conclude at present.

OBSERV. "That God many times ushers in a glorious work of reformation, by very cloudy, dark, and dismal dispensations of providence."

What a dismal aspect had God's procedure in the preceding verses! and yet grace and mercy break out of that dark cloud. But the farther prosecution of this doctrine I shall refer till the afternoon. The Lord bless his word.

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID RUINED BY MAN, AND REARED UP BY THE MIGHTY GOD.

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.—Amos ix. 11.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

Having explained this portion of scripture in the forenoon, I shall not stand to resume any thing that was said that way. I just named a doctrine from the words taken in their connexion, to wit, "That it is God's ordinary way to usher in the revival and restoration of his own work, by very awful, dark, and gloomy dispensations of providence." Here was a very dark day, a day of destruction from the presence of the Lord, a day of hewing down by the sword, a day of unhinging nations and churches; and yet you see what it all terminates and resolves in:—*In that day will I build up the tabernacle of David, I will restore the breaches, and repair the ruins thereof, as in the days of old.*

I remember, when the prophet Elijah came to mount Horeb, the Lord passed by him, and he knew it not. There is a very strange appearance made to the prophet: first, there was a great and stormy wind raised, which breaks the rocks and shakes the mountains, but God was not in the wind: after the wind came an earthquake; but God was not there: after the earthquake came a fire; but God was not in the fire. Well, what does all this resolve in? This was just a preparation towards God's manifesting of himself to the prophet in the *still and small voice.* This is God's ordinary way of working, both towards particular persons, and particular churches; *clouds and darkness are round about him* in his way, before *mercy and truth* are seen *going before his face.*

I read you two or three texts of scripture to confirm it. The one you have in the prophet Malachi, the last chapter of the Old Testament, 1st and 2nd verses: "Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly, shall be stubble; and the day that cometh shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch." Well, but the cloud turns about, and the bright side of it appears, in ver. 2: "But unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of Right-

eousness arise with healing in his wings, and ye shall go forth and grow up as calves of the stall." Ver. 3: "And ye shall tread down the wicked; for they shall be ashes under the soles of your feet in the day that I shall do this, saith the Lord of hosts." Zech. xiii. 8, 9: "And it shall come to pass, that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off, and die, but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried." Well, what follows upon that? "They shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." I only name another, in the prophecy of Isaiah, chap. iv. We see terrible work in the close of the preceding chapter: "Thy men shall fall by the sword, and thy mighty men in the war. And her gates shall lament and mourn; and she being desolate shall sit upon the ground." And the land shall be so desolate, that "seven women shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Well, what comes out of that? See it in ver. 2, 3: "In that day shall the branch of the house of the Lord be beautiful and glorious, and the fruit of the earth shall be excellent and comely, for them that are escaped of Israel. And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even every one that is written among the living in Jerusalem."

For the farther confirmation of this truth, I shall produce two or three instances, from which it will appear, that God's ordinary way is to usher in the enlarging and up-building of his church by such awful and terrible dispensations.

And the first I name is, God's planting a church for himself in the land of Canaan. When God has a mind to pitch his tabernacle there, according to the promise made to Abraham, by which he made a grant of it to him and to his seed, what way goes he to work? First, Israel is brought into Egypt, and are made to groan there for four hundred years. When the time of their deliverance comes, Egypt is plagued; Pharaoh and his host is turned into the Red sea, there they are executed as on a high gibbet; six hundred thousand that came out of Egypt, are made to dung the wilderness with their carcasses; after that, twenty or thirty kingdoms are overthrown, and the old inhabitants are pulled up by the roots. And then the Lord sets up his tabernacle, and puts Israel in possession of the land, according to his promise.

Another instance to the same purpose is in the return of the children of Israel from the Babylonish captivity. Before

the captivity, they were so degenerate, so sunk in sin, that it was impossible to mend them; they were, like an old house, too crazy and ruinous to be patched up. Therefore what does the Lord? He takes them quite down, he unhinges their civil and ecclesiastical constitution, he as it were pulls them up from the very ground, he makes the land spew out its inhabitants, he sells Israel into the hand of the Babylonians, and lets them lie there seventy years, till the land enjoyed her Sabbaths. Well, what does he after the land had enjoyed her Sabbaths? What a strange revolution is made to bring Israel out of captivity! The great Babylonish empire must be turned over to the hands of the Medes and Persians, and this makes way for Israel to return; and he "makes them then to take root downward, and bring forth fruit upward."

A third instance I give you is in New Testament times, about three hundred years after our blessed Lord, in the days of Constantine the Great. When the whole strength of the Roman empire had been employed for suppressing the name of a crucified Christ, that empire is made to bow to the Mediator's sceptre, to the sceptre of a crucified Jesus; but before that comes about, what seas of Christian blood must be shed in ten several bloody persecutions? And when these are over, what strange catastrophies, what terrible convulsions follow? "The kings and great men, the mighty men of the earth," the grandees and great folk in the Roman empire that opposed Christ, are overthrown in many pitched battles; and then they cry, as we read in Rev. vi. to the hills and mountains to hide them from the terror of the name Christ that was upon them; and after all this comes deliverance and enlargement to the Christians.

A fourth instance is yet to come, and that is, the revival of the church upon the downfal of Antichrist. We read in Rev. xi. that Antichrist prevails to the slaying of the witnesses, and his kingdom is carried to such a prodigious height, that all the nations and kingdoms of the earth are made drunk with the wine of his fornication, his vile idolatries and delusions. But in the 18th, 19th, and 20th chapters of the book of Revelation, we have an account of the overthrow of Antichrist, with such terrible appearances of God in his providence, that men are made to ride in blood to the horses' bridles; and after all this "the beast, and the false prophet, and Satan who deceived them, are cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," where they shall be tormented day and night for ever and ever. Then comes down the new Jerusalem out of heaven, Jew and Gentile are converted to the faith of Christ; a cry comes from heaven, saying, "Behold the tabernacle of

God is with men." From all these things the truth of the doctrine is abundantly evident, that God commonly ushers in his remarkable appearances for his church with very awful and cloudy dispensations of providence.

Readily you may ask me the reason of this, why is it God goes this way to work? I answer,

1. In the *first* place, One reason of it is, that he may be avenged on the persecutors and enemies of his church and people. Why does God plague and overthrow Egypt, but to avenge the quarrel of Israel upon Pharaoh and the Egyptians? Why is the Babylonish empire overthrown, but to avenge the quarrel of Israel that had been oppressed by them seventy years? See a word to this purpose, Jer. l. 33, 34: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, The children of Israel, and the children of Judah, were oppressed together, and all that took them captives, held them fast; they refused to let them go. Their Redeemer is strong, the Lord of hosts is his name; he shall thoroughly plead their cause, that he may give rest to the land, and disquiet the inhabitants of Babylon." God will take his own time to resent his people's quarrel; he lets them lie for awhile under the feet of their enemies; but "the rod of the wicked shall not always rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity. —Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and he will make inquisition for the blood of his saints that has been shed like water in our streets. Much of this blood was shed in the times of persecuting tyranny, particularly in this city, [Edinburgh.] That blood, I say, hath not been purged; yea, the guilt of it calls for wrath upon us their sinful posterity. There was no due inquiry after it, when the Lord turned back our captivity after the Revolution; yea, instead of that, men who had dipt their hands in the blood of his saints were put into places and posts both civil and military; yea, I will add, that they were admitted to sit as constituent members in the supreme judicatories of this church. We have reason to believe, that he will inquire after that blood; for he "visits the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, to the third and fourth generation." It is crying yet from under the altar against many families in Scotland; and I fear it has a loud cry against this city, where it was shed in great abundance.

2. But then a *second* reason why God goes this way to work is, that he may remove the abounding offences in the visible church, and roll away the impediments that hinder her reformation. The visible church is just like a draw-net, that takes in both good and bad fishes; and sometimes the net is so full of bad fishes, bad ministers, bad magistrates, and bad profes-

sors, that error, iniquity, profanity, and scandalous offences, instead of being suppressed, are encouraged and patronised by those whose office obliges them to stand up for the great God according to their commission. Well, when those things are neglected by men of power and authority, or by judicatories civil and ecclesiastical; when scandalous errors, wickednesses, and abominations, are not purged by those whose province it is to do it, God takes the work in his own hand; his turn shall not lie behind; he will put to his hand, and do it himself, rather than it lie undone. But a terrible work he makes when he begins; I shall read you a scripture to this purpose, in Is. lix. 13: "In transgressing, and lying against the Lord, and departing away from our God, speaking oppression, conceiving and uttering from the heart words of falsehood. Judgment is turned away backward, and justice standeth afar off: for truth is fallen in the street, and equity cannot enter. Yea, truth faileth, and he that departeth from evil maketh himself a prey." Well, what follows? The Lord *saw* it, that his cause and work was neglected, and it displeased him that there was no judgment: he saw that there was no man to stand up for his truths and his ways, and for the privileges of his subjects; "Therefore his own arm brought salvation unto him; and his righteousness it sustained him: for he put on righteousness as a breast-plate, and a helmet of salvation upon his head; and he put on the garments of vengeance for clothing, and was clad with zeal as a cloak. According to their deeds, accordingly he will repay, fury to his adversaries, recompense to his enemies, to the islands he will repay recompense." I fear, this points at the island of Britain, for the public affronts done to God in it, and the neglect of magistrates, ministers, and others, in purging the house of God of scandalous offences and abominations. I shall give you an instance in the case of Eli's two sons; they abandoned themselves to such scandalous carriage about the tabernacle of God, that they gave offence to all that feared God in Israel; yea, "they made the sacrifices of the Lord to be abhorred" by their scandalous way of acting. Well, Eli, who was both their father and their judge, neglected to take them to task as he ought to have done; he censured them, but it was very slightly and superficially; just like some sentences passed in the judicatories of this church, when the honour of Christ required much more to be done. Well, what does the Lord when offences abound, and Eli neglects to pass due censure upon his sons? He "does a thing that makes the ears of every one that heard tell of it to tingle." Hophni and Phinehas, his two sons, are slain in battle, Eli's neck is broken, and the armies of Israel fall before the Philistines;

the ark of God is carried away into captivity, and delivered into the hands of the Philistines. Some hundreds of years after, the quarrel is pursued farther; eighty-five of his posterity are slain by the sword in one day; Abiathar, one of his seed, in the days of Solomon, is turned out of his priesthood, for being concerned in Adonijah's conspiracy; and the whole of his posterity are reduced to beggary and slavery. So, you see, God goes this way to work, that he may purge his house of corruptions and offences, especially when this is neglected by those clothed with authority, secular or spiritual, for that end. But then, again,

3. Another reason why God goes this way to work in building up his own tabernacle is, because there is something godlike, great-like and majestic in this manner of procedure. There is an awful and terrible majesty in God's way of working, particularly in his way of repairing and building up his house: "Clouds and darkness are round about him, and yet righteousness and judgment are the habitation of his throne; the heavens declare his righteousness, and all the people see his glory." There is something very admirable in this way of working.

1*st*, In respect of God himself. It is seen that the excellency of the power is of him, and not of any instrument whatsoever. Is it not for the glory of God, to open a way for himself that seems altogether impassable? Is. xlii. 15, 16: "I will make waste mountains and hills, and dry up all their herbs; and I will make the rivers islands, and I will dry up the pools." What follows? "I will lead the blind by a way they know not, and in paths they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight." It is good for the Lord's people to be aiming and endeavouring at the restoration of his house, though they know not a step before them; for though they be bemisted, yet the Lord leads them, and he makes crooked things straight. But then,

2*dly*, There is something in this way admirable in respect of religion itself. All false religions have been propagated by an arm of flesh; Mahometanism by force, Popery by fire and fagot; but the true religion of Jesus, by ways and means that would rather seem to crush it. These bloody persecutions I was speaking of would rather seem to smother the cause of Christ, than any other thing; and yet the Lord advanced his interest by the blood of his saints. Who would ever have thought, that by a handful of poor illiterate fishermen the whole world should be made to subject themselves to a crucified Christ, a contemned Jesus of Nazareth?

3*dly*, It is admirable likewise in respect of the people of

God, and the effect that this way of working has upon them; for hereby God purges away their dross: "By this shall the iniquity of Jacob be purged, and this is all the fruit to take away his sin." These things do not indeed purge away sin meritoriously, but they do it instrumentally, by sending them to the right quarter, even to the blood of Christ; and whenever they are washed here, they begin to cry, with Ephraim, "What have I any more to do with idols?" Hereby he tries them, what metal they are of; not that he is ignorant of it, but to let them know their own weakness, that they have no strength in themselves, but must trust in the living God. Hereby he improves their graces; by these cloudy and dark dispensations he polishes their graces, and rubs off their rust: "Tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed." You know the pruning of the tree contributes to the fertility and growth of the branches. By these trials, God, as the Lord of his vineyard, prunes the luxuriant branches of his planting, by which they are made more prolific in the way of godliness. And hereby the Lord weans their hearts from this vain and transitory world: "Their light affliction worketh for them a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory:" therefore they "look not at things which are seen, but at things that are not seen: for the things that are seen, are temporal; but the things which are not seen, are eternal."

I should next go on to the application. I see your time has much prevented me; therefore I shall conclude all at present with two inferences:—

1. In the *first* place then, If it be so, as you have been hearing, that this is God's way of setting up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and closing up the breaches thereof, by such awful, dark, and cloudy dispensations; hence I infer, that unless God has a mind to take his kingdom away from us, unless he has a mind to lift his candlestick, and bid farewell to us for ever, we have reason to look for very awful and dismal dispensations of divine Providence in this land. Many black signs of God's anger are already gone forth: God has in a great measure departed from high and low, rich and poor; departed from magistrates, ministers, and people: little of God is to be seen in ordinances, or the judicatories of his church; we have "forsaken the fountain of living waters." Oh what barrenness under a dispensed gospel! What abounding profanity! what cursing and swearing! what tyranny and oppression, particularly in ecclesiastical liberties and privileges! How are intruders enrolled among the number of the

ambassadors of Christ! How are the privileges of the Lord's people sacrificed, in order to compliment the "man with the gold ring and the gay clothing!" How little difference is there put betwixt the *precious and the vile!* The land is groaning under a weight of sin, and the sin of the land is crying for vengeance at the hand of God. I doubt if these, and many other offences, and the occasions of them, be removed, till God put to his hand, as in the manner you were hearing in the doctrine; therefore we had need to prepare for a storm: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel."

2. A *second* inference I make is, If it be so, that God ushers in the restoration and up-building of David's tabernacle in such a way, here is ground of encouragement to the Lord's people. Whatever dismal days may cast up, all shall issue in the advancement of the interest of Christ, and the good of them that love him.

There are only these grounds and topics of consolation I would mention to you.

1*st*, Here is comfort and encouragement, that Zion's King liveth, and he will outlive all his enemies: "The Lord liveth, blessed be my rock: and let the God of my salvation be exalted."

2*dly*, He not only lives, but reigns; and this is ground of comfort: "Let Israel rejoice in him that made him: let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." Why? "The Lord reigneth, even thy God, O Zion, to all generations. The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the isles be glad thereof."

3*dly*, He is adjusting all his providential dispensations for the good and advantage of his own people: "He rides in the very heavens for their help." "God's way," many times, "is in the sea, and his paths in the great waters, and his footsteps are not known." But though we cannot trace his steps, yet well does he know the way he is taking with his people, when he is plunging them as it were over head and ears in the deep waters of Marah. "Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hid from the Lord, and my judgment is passed over from my God? Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding. Therefore "thy way cannot be hid from the Lord, nor thy judgment passed over from thy God," Is. xl.

4*thly*, Know, for thy encouragement, believer, that whatever he do with you, though he should send a scattering wind, and sift you among the nations, yet not one grain shall be lost; his eye follows his remnant, wherever they go: "The

eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is upright before him."

And then know, for thy encouragement, believer, that, go where thou wilt, thy God will go with thee, a God in Christ will bear thee company: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the floods, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." And is not this glorious encouragement? He has his people set at all times as a seal upon his heart and arm, whatever be his dispensations towards them.

Then know, believer, whatever be thy situation in the world, or whatever be thy apprehensions of thyself, thou art standing in heaven in the person of thy High Priest, thy Head, and thy elder Brother. As the high priest, when he stood within the veil, represented all the people of Israel; so all the true Israel of God are standing within the veil of these visible heavens, in their great representative: "He hath made us accepted in the beloved." And is not this glorious encouragement?

I conclude with two or three words of advice in this cloudy day, or in case a darker day cast up.

1. My advice to every one that has any regard to their eternal well-being is, To see that their standing be right: for if you be not standing upon the rock, upon the foundation God has laid in Zion, you will never stand in the day of trial; when the flood of trouble and persecution comes, you will give way, and be carried down before the flood. Therefore take care that you be settled upon the rock Christ, "not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

2. Another advice I give you is, Beware of an evil heart of unbelief; for the root of all apostacy and defection lies here: Heb. iii. 12: "Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God." Let your life in the world be a life of faith on the Son of God: for there is no standing, no warring, but by faith: "This is the victory whereby we overcome the world, even our faith."

3. Another advice I give to the Lord's remnant is, That they would beware of the prevailing defections in the day and generation in which they live. Keep your garments

clean; for they that keep the Lord's way, and his testimony, he will take care of them, and keep them: Rev. iii. 10: "Because thou hast kept the word of my patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth." And then,

4. See that you be among the mourners in Zion, that sigh and cry for all the dishonours done to God in the day in which you live. God takes care of such in an evil day: he puts a mark upon them, and gives charge to the man with the slaughter-weapon, not to touch any of them upon whom the mark is set. Then,

5. Another advice I give you is, Beware of every thing that may mislead you; beware of every person that may mislead you: "Evil communication corrupts good manners." Christ in a special manner bids us, "beware of false prophets, that come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ravening wolves." We are advised in scripture to beware of several kinds of guides, that we may not commit our souls to their keeping or direction in their eternal concerns. As,

First, We are to beware of *blind* guides, men that are ignorant of the work of God upon their own hearts, that are ignorant of the narrow way that leadeth unto life. How shall they lead others to heaven, who are not travelling the road to it themselves? When "the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch."

Then we are advised, likewise, to beware of *barking* guides: *Beware of dogs*; that is to say, men who bark at the truth, and who bark at honest ministers and Christians that desire to adhere to the truth in a day of defection. "Beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision."

We are, likewise, warned against *dumb* guides, who have not a mouth to open for Christ or his cause. The watchman is to give the cry when the city is in danger of being given up into the hands of the enemy. The Lord commands his ministers to "cry aloud, and to spare not, to lift up their voice like a trumpet, and show his people their transgressions, and the house of Jacob their sins." It is a sign that the watchman is in a confederacy with the enemy, who is silent when the enemy is breaking down the carved work of God's temple: can that man be counted faithful to his trust?

Then we are, likewise, to beware of *erroneous* guides, men that are tinctured and leavened with error. A sad watch of this kind has of late come abroad into the world; a whole system of errors, in a catechism published for promoting Ar-

minian, Arian, and Socinian errors, and in order to darken the truth. Beware of such erroneous men, who will "give a stone for bread, and a scorpion instead of a fish;" and those also, who industriously skreen and cover erroneous men from due censure. No man that has a regard to his natural life, but will take care to have a steward that will provide him with wholesome food; and much greater reason have persons to beware of erroneous teachers, that poison souls with erroneous doctrine.

Likewise beware of *intruding* guides, that force themselves, or are active in intruding others into the priest's office, or allow themselves to be forced in upon a representation or a sham call, "for a piece of bread:" they can never be true and faithful guides for souls, that do so. "No man taketh this honour to himself, but he that is called of God." And, in opposition to such, it is the duty of the Lord's people at this day to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free."

Then another advice I would give you is, O "keep your hearts in the love of God." Study to maintain the lively impresssion of the love of God in Christ; for that will kindle your zeal for God and his glory, in a day when "the love of many is waxed cold." And it will make you stand when the floods of trouble and persecution are running; for "many waters cannot quench love, neither can the floods drown it: if a man would give all the substance of his house for this love, it would be utterly contemned" and despised.

And then another advice I give you is, Study to maintain the fear of God upon your spirits, and beware of the fear of man. The fear of man has been a terrible snare in our day and generation; many have been carried off their feet by the fears or flatteries of men; but beware of this. "Who art thou that should be afraid of man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be as grass?" What are all flesh before God but like grass? "All flesh is grass;" therefore let us not be afraid of man that is as grass, but let us fear the Lord our maker, that "stretched forth the heavens, and laid the foundations of the earth."

And then, *lastly*, Study meekness and quietness of spirit, in opposition to a spirit of anger, wrath, malice, or of hatred; Zech. ii. 3: "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment, seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be, ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." Our proud spirits are ready to take fire in defending the cause of Christ. Moses was the most zealous man upon earth, and yet he was the meekest man upon earth. "The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God:" and

Christ's cause and interest was never advanced by a spirit of wrath.

And in order to meeken your spirits, consider these two things I shall name.

1*st*, What a holy and righteous hand God has even in the most dark and cloudy dispensations that can befall his church in the world. Should we be angry at what God does? "Who gave Jacob to the spoil, and Israel to the robbers? did not the Lord, he against whom we have sinned?"

2*dly*, Let us consider what we deserve at God's hand, what a sinful hand the best of us have in bringing these gloomy dispensations on the land and place in which we live. It was the consideration of this, that made the church, in a very dark day, (Mic. vii. 9,) to say when she was sitting in darkness, when her enemies were insulting her, saying, "Where is thy God?" says the church, in that case, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him." Not only they, but I have sinned against him, therefore "I will bear the indignation of the Lord."

THE TABERNACLE OF DAVID RUINED BY MAN, AND REARED UP BY THE MIGHTY GOD.

In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof, and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.—AMOS IX. 11.

THE THIRD SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I HAD occasion elsewhere to insist a little upon the context, and the connexion of these words with the preceding, and shall not spend time in resuming what was then delivered. Only I take up the words of this verse in these four particulars: (1.) We have a noble structure mentioned, and that is, *the tabernacle of David;* by which we are to understand the church of Christ, particularly the New Testament church; for so these words are applied by the apostle James, in his speech before the first council at Jerusalem, Acts xv. 16. Christ is called by the name of *David*, because he was "the root and offspring of David," he in whom David's horn and throne is perpetuated for ever, Psal. lxxxix. 4. And the church is called his tabernacle, because he is the purchaser,

he is the builder, he is the principal inhabitant of this dwelling. (2.) We may notice the melancholy situation of this tabernacle of David: it is supposed here to be in a *fallen, broken,* and *ruined* condition. The church of Christ is sometimes sorely battered and shattered by the gates of hell, and its emissaries, but they shall never prevail totally to ruin and destroy her. For, (3.) We see here God's gracious purpose and promise with reference to his broken and ruinous tabernacle: *I will build it, I will raise it up, I will close up its breaches;* or, as in the margin, *I will wall and hedge it about.* God exercises a particular care about this tabernacle, "the Highest himself will stablish her." (4.) Notice the time when God will perform this work in mount Zion and in Jerusalem: it is *in that day;* that is, in my own stated and appointed time, in the days of the Messiah, when the voice shall be heard from heaven, "The tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them," Rev. xxi. 3. But more of this day afterward.

By comparing these words with those immediately preceding, they afford us this doctrine, "That God frequently ushers in the reformation of his church by very dark and cloudy dispensations of providence." This doctrine I insisted upon already, and shall say no more upon it.

The doctrine I design at present is this:—

Doct. "That God has his own time and way of rebuilding or reforming his church, when she is brought to a very low and ruinous condition:" *In that day will I build up the tabernacle of David,* &c.

The method I propose, through divine assistance, is as follows:—

I. Why the church of Christ is represented under the name and notion of a *tabernacle,* and why *the tabernacle of David.*

II. When this tabernacle of David may be said to be fallen, or to be in a broken or ruinous condition.

III. How, or by what ways and means, doth the Lord raise up the tabernacle of David, when fallen.

IV. Offer a few thoughts respecting the day when the Lord does this great work.

V. Why the Lord will rebuild his ruined tabernacle, and not allow it to lie in the rubbish.

VI. Offer a few inferences from the whole, by way of application.

I. The *first* thing in the method is, *Why the church of*

Christ, particularly now under the New Testament, is represented under the notion of a tabernacle. Answ. There seems to be a plain allusion here to the tabernacle, which, by God's special command to Moses, was reared in the wilderness; it is an Old Testament style applied to the New Testament church, which is very frequent. Now, that Old Testament tabernacle was a type of the New Testament church, in these particulars:—

1. The tabernacle was God's lodging and habitation in the camp of Israel, a symbol of God's gracious presence among them: hence Balaam, when he viewed the camp and tents of Israel, and the tabernacle of God in the midst of the camp, cries, "How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel! The Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a king is in the midst of him." Moses had his tent, Aaron had his, every commander and soldier had his tent, and the tabernacle was the tent or habitation of the great God. In this respect the church is called a tabernacle, because she is God's lodging or habitation upon earth. With this view Christ, the wisdom of God, says, Prov. viii., that "he rejoiced from eternity in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men." The symbols of his presence are in his church, and there he holds communication and fellowship with his people: Psal. lxxvi. 1, 2: "In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel. In Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion." Psal. cxxxii. 13, 14: "The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest, here will I dwell, for I have desired it."

2. The divine oracles, the law and the testimony, were preserved and kept in the tabernacle, and from thence they were given out for the use of Israel: so to the church pertains the oracles of God, his revealed mind and will in the scriptures of truth is committed to her trust: "He showeth his word unto Jacob, and his testimonies unto Israel: he hath not dealt so with any nation." Every jot and tittle of the revealed will of God in his word, is to be maintained and preserved pure and entire by the church, without any addition, diminution, or alteration, and that under an awful malediction, Rev. xxii. 18, 19; hence we are commanded to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints." And whenever any error in doctrine, corruption in worship, or iniquity in practice, is broached in the church, presently it is to be brought to the standard and touchstone of the word, in order to its being condemned as dissonant thereto: Is. viii.: "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them."

Hence heretics, who maintain doctrines repugnant to the word of God, "after two or three admonitions," are to be cast out of the church, and "delivered over to Satan."

3. The tabernacle was the place of worship. In the courts of the tabernacle Israel were to stand and do homage to the great God, the God of Israel; and every one was to worship there, according to God's appointment, and not according to their own fancy. So the church of Christ is the place where he will be worshipped and sanctified of all that are about him. The ordinances of divine institution, particularly the public ordinances of preaching and hearing, of prayer and praise, are the courts of the great King, where he will have his people to attend him with their offerings, and to pay him their tribute: Is. lvi. 7: "I will bring them to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt-offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar; for my house shall be called a house of prayer for all people."

4. The pattern of the tabernacle was given by God to Moses in the mount, together with all the laws, statutes, and regulations of it. Moses was not left at liberty to order one pin of the tabernacle otherwise than according to the pattern. So the model of the church, with a perfect system of laws, by which she is to be governed, is given of God in the mount of divine revelation. And for any man to assert, that the government of the church of Christ is [varying] and uncertain, or that he has left no orders how to manage in the election of officers to his New Testament church, is upon the matter to impeach the scriptures of truth with imperfection; or to affirm, that God has less regard to his church now under the New Testament, than he had about the management of that little portable thing, called the tabernacle of old.

5. No man was to intrude himself into the service of the tabernacle, or to "take this honour unto himself, but he that was called of God, as was Aaron." If any man had usurped the priesthood, besides these whom the Lord called, all Israel would have been ready to stone him to death. And what an awful [demonstration] of divine wrath was it against Korah, Dathan, and Abiram, when, for usurping the priesthood, among other things, the Lord made the earth to open its mouth, and swallow them up alive. All Israel, by God's appointment, were ordered to make a secession from them, lest the anger of God should fall upon them also. In like manner, under the New Testament church, no man is to intrude himself into the sacred offices of the church, unless he be qualified and called of God to that work. Those who enter into the fold of the church, and assume the name and notion of

shepherds, without entering by the door of a lawful and regular call, are branded with the infamous character of thieves and robbers by Christ, John x. Men in our day are become so polite, that they think these hard names to be given to any man; but scripture styles and characters will stand firm, and be in request, when all the pretended politeness and eloquence of men will be buried in the dust of oblivion.

6. The greatest and most sacred thing in the tabernacle was the ark and mercy-seat, with the cherubims covering it with their wings, and looking down continually into it. This pointed out the sacred mystery of the incarnation, obedience, and death of Christ, by which the law is magnified and made honourable, and through whom God declares himself to be a merciful and reconciled God. These sacred mysteries, typified in the tabernacle, are now opened in the promulgation of the gospel: hence, in Rev. xi. 19, it is said, "The temple of God was opened, and the ark of his testament was seen." It is the great business of ministers of the gospel, now under the New Testament, to disclose or open the ark of the covenant of grace, to preach Christ, and the manifold wisdom of God through him, in the salvation of lost sinners; "which things the cherubims, or angels, desire to look into."

7. The ark was a portable or moveable kind of a tent, and was carried about by God's appointment, from one place to another, and never had a fixed abode, until it came to mount Zion, and was set in its proper place in the temple. In like manner the church of God, while in this world, is not fixed to any particular nation; he lifts it from one nation to another, as best serves his glorious ends in gathering in his elect, until the mystical body of Christ is completed; and then the church militant will be transported to the church triumphant in glory.

Other things might be added. The manna was in the ark; so the bread of life is in the church. Aaron's rod was in the ark; so ecclesiastical authority is only to be administered in the church, and by the officers and judges of God's ordination. The candlesticks and the lamps were in the ark; so in the church the light of the Lord shines, therefore called a valley of vision. Thus, you see on what account the church of Christ is called a *tabernacle*.

Before I leave this head, I will tell you, in a few words, why she is called *the tabernacle of David*, that is, of Christ. *Answ.* Because of the manifold claim and title he has to her. As, (1.) She is his by his Father's gift and ordination: Psal. ii.: "I will give him the heathen for his inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession." (2.) By purchase. He has redeemed her by the price of his precious

blood: Acts xx. 28: "Feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (3.) His by conquest. She is his spoil taken from principalities and powers; he "divides a portion with the strong. (4.) His by marriage. He betroths her to himself for ever; her *Maker* is her *Husband*, even her *Redeemer*, whose name is *the Lord of hosts*. (5.) He is the builder of the church. "The man whose name is the BRANCH, he shall build the temple of the Lord, and bear the glory." (6.) He is the foundation and chief corner-stone: Is. xxviii. 16: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone, a sure foundation." (7.) He is her only Head, King, and Governor, and she owns him as such, saying, "The Lord is our Judge, the Lord is our King, the Lord is our Lawgiver." (8.) She is his by possession: "The Lord's portion is his people, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." But on these things I will not enlarge.

II. The *second* thing in the method was, to *inquire when the tabernacle of David may be said to be fallen, broken, and ruinous?* An answer to this may easily be gathered from what has been already said; as,

1. The tabernacle of David may be said to be fallen, when the God of the tabernacle is departed. That which made the tabernacle amiable to David was, that the living God was there. The tabernacle is but an empty house when God is gone, when the cloud of his presence is withdrawn. The day has been, when God "created upon *our* Zion, and upon her assemblies, a cloud by day, and the shining of a flaming fire by night." But, alas! now we see not the signs of his wonted presence; a melancholy *Ichabod*, "the glory is departed!" may be read in every corner of the land. This will be farther evident from what follows.

2. The tabernacle of David is fallen and ruinous, when the oracles of God, the law and the testimony, are not carefully kept, and purely dispensed. Blessed be God, we have the written word in purity, we have excellent standards of doctrine in our Confession of Faith and Catechisms. But how is the law and testimony dispensed and given out through many corners in Scotland, when an empty jingle of human oratory, and dry harangues of heathenish morality, or virtue, as they call it, are substituted in the room of the gospel of Christ? a natural kind of religion preached up, and the supernatural mysteries of the gospel, such as the incarnation and satisfaction of the Son of God, justification by his imputed righteousness; regeneration, sanctification, or gospel-holiness, generally exploded as unfashionable among many of our young ministers? And,

among those that aim at better things, how little is the true order of gospel-doctrine observed, while the duties of the law are inculcated as the foundation of the glorious privileges of the gospel, and not the grace of God in the gospel laid as the foundation both of privilege and duty? the weapons that are "mighty through God for pulling down the strong-holds" of Satan, are cast away, and weapons that are merely carnal taken up in their room. We have ministers now-a-days, who, instead of teaching men to deny themselves, do teach from press and pulpit, that self-love is the foundation and original of moral virtue, or of all the duties required in the moral law; and carnal reason is asserted to be the first principle of religion. And although Arian, Socinian, Arminian, and other detestable and abominable errors be rampant; yet where is there a suitable banner of a testimony emitted against them, that it might be given unto them that fear him? Higher censures have been inflicted upon men for preaching the truths of God, than upon others for denying the supreme and independent Deity of the Son of God. This says that the tabernacle of God is fallen and ruinous among us.

3. The tabernacle of David is fallen, when the God of the tabernacle is not worshipped according to his appointment: when idolatry, superstition, or formality of worship, takes the place of that purity and spirituality of worship that God requires. And is not this the case with us at this day? The idolatry of the mass is so open and avowed in some corners of our land, that Protestants are insulted by Roman Catholics, when one is going to their parish church on the Lord's day; and the other to attend the mass. The public prints inform us of the multitude of mass houses in England, and particularly in and about London. As for superstitious worship, it is well known how that is established by law in England, and tolerated in Scotland, contrary to the solemn oaths of God lying upon these lands. And, as for formality of worship, look through the most of our worshipping assemblies through Scotland, and we shall find the carcass of worship, instead of the soul of it, presented to the living God. Nothing but dead ministers and dead people, dead preaching, hearing, praying, and praising; the generality of ministers and people sitting down with a form of godliness, while the life and power of it is quite gone. Little of the perfume of the Mediator's garments, like "myrrh, aloes, and cassia," is to be found in the "ivory palaces" at this day.

4. The tabernacle of David is then fallen and ruinous, when it is not kept up according to "the pattern in the mount;" and when the laws, statutes, and ordinances of it are not observed as in the days of old. At our reformation

from Popery, God's tabernacle was set up according to the word of God; not only the doctrine and worship, but the government and discipline of the house of God, was stated from the scriptures of truth, and solemnly adopted by the oath of the great God to be preserved and maintained in the land to all succeeding generations; acts of public authority, both civil and ecclesiastical, were made for its preservation. But, alas! "is not the land defiled under the inhabitants thereof, because we have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances" of God's tabernacle, and "broken the everlasting covenant?" Is. xxiv. 5, as might be evinced in many particulars; but as this has been done in part from the press, so it may come to be done more fully ere long. I shall only say, that if Mr. Knox, and others of our worthy reformers, who, at the expense of their blood and treasure, set up the tabernacle of God in this land, were to lift up their heads, and view the frame and form in which it now stands, they would be ready to say, This is not the tabernacle of David that we set up, and left behind us; the glory of it is departed.

5. The tabernacle of David is in a ruinous condition, when men are entered upon tabernacle work and service, without being called, qualified, and sanctified for such service. And is not this the case at this day in Scotland? Intrusions have been carried on with a high hand, under the mask of ecclesiastic authority, both in the neighbouring congregations, and in many corners through Scotland. There has been a great cry of reformation these two last assemblies; but where is there an intrusion overturned through all Scotland to this day, except that of Auchtermuchty? which yet was not upon a clean scriptural ground: and since that pretended step, do we not see intruders upon Christian congregations getting the right hand of fellowship in presbyteries and synods every day; and some, by an assembly authority, enrolled among the ambassadors of Christ? Where has there a process of censure yet been raised by any judicatory in Scotland against those, who, contrary to the laws and constitutions of the church, yea, the natural liberties of mankind, adventured to carry on such intrusions? How many such unhallowed hands are admitted to tabernacle service through the land! God's tabernacle and temple should be purged of buyers and sellers; of all ignorant, erroneous, and scandalous ministers; and till this be done, I fear the blood of many souls shall not be wiped off from the tables where judicatories meet. That is an awful cry from under the altar of God's tabernacle; "How long, O Lord, holy and true, wilt thou not avenge our blood upon them that dwell upon the earth?" Rev. vi. 10. I wish it be not too applicable to the case in hand.

I might tell you farther, if time and the season had allowed, that the tabernacle of David is in a fallen and ruinous condition, when Christ, the prophet, priest, and king of the tabernacle, is slighted and undervalued; when he is not entertained by faith, and employed in all his saving offices, according to the offer of the gospel. And this is a charge that falls upon you who are the people. O how few receive Christ by a faith of God's operation! although all be called Christians, yet how few have any thing of the spirit of Christ! and how few walk even as he walked! Tabernacle worshippers and professors should be holy, as he that hath called them is holy; but, alas! what untenderness of walk and talk is there among the generality! These and many other things that might be insisted upon, plainly declare, that the tabernacle of David among us is in a fallen and ruinous condition.

III. The *third* thing proposed was, *to inquire how it is that God raises up his tabernacle when it is fallen?* I answer in general, That adorable sovereignty is not to be limited to any particular way of working; for by speaking a word, he can plant the heavens, and lay the foundations of the earth. If he say to Jerusalem, "Thou shalt be built," and to the temple, "Thy foundations shall be laid," presently it is done; a nation, if he has a mind, can be born unto him at once. But in his ordinary way of working, some of his steps may be observed; as,

1. He uses, in a time of defection, to raise up witnesses to bear testimony against the corruptions and mismanagements of men about his tabernacle. Thus, Rev. xi. before the temple of God is opened in heaven, witnesses are raised up to torment the men that dwell upon the earth; the evidence of truth brought forth by the witnesses, has a tormenting power with it upon the consciences of corrupt men; it "pierces to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, of joints and marrow:" and sometimes their corruptions are so irritated by the truth, that, like swine, they turn about and rent and kill the witnesses, casting out their bodies to the open streets, as we see, Rev. xi. The tabernacle of David has been preserved in all ages, and in our own land particularly, by the testimony of witnesses: and it is something of a bright spot in our dark cloud at this day, that God has not left himself altogether without witnesses: and it is pretty well known, how some have been cast out and their names torn both by unsound ministers and professors; and it is hard to tell but their carcasses, ere all be done, may yet be cast out as dung in the streets.

2. The Lord puts it in the hearts of his people and ministers, to take pleasure in the stones and rubbish of his fallen tabernacle, and to mourn and lament over their own sins, and the tokens of the Lord's anger that have gone out against them. We see the church, Psal. cii. in the 10th or 11th verse, is lamenting over her ruinous condition, and God's departure from her; and see what follows upon this, ver. 13, 14, 16, 17: "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time is come. For thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof. When the Lord shall build up Zion, he shall appear in his glory. He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." The same we see also, Zech. xii. 10, to the close; the Spirit of grace, supplication, and mourning, is poured out, and every family and house mourn and wrestle apart; and see what a glorious reformation follows upon the back of this, chap. xiii., the fountain of divine grace is opened, sin and uncleanness is washed away, the names of the idols of the land are cut off, the false prophet and unclean spirits are cast out of the land, false prophets are ashamed, neither are they allowed to "wear a rough garment to deceive."

3. The Lord polishes and prepares some shafts for tabernacle work and service, as he did Bezaleel and Aboliab for rearing the tabernacle, and all manner of work about the tabernacle in the wilderness. When God was to raise up a New Testament church, he gives apostles, prophets, pastors, and teachers, for edifying his body: by the ministry of a few fishermen, whom he endues with gifts and grace, he overthrows the idolatries of the nations, and unhinges the Mosaic economy, and rears up a glorious tabernacle for himself; and observe the weapon made use of was, the preaching of a crucified Christ, to be the only Saviour of a lost world, which, though it was "to the Jews a stumbling-block, and to the Greeks foolishness," yet proved "the power of God to salvation."

4. His tabernacle is raised up by a plentiful down-pouring of his Spirit. Hos. xiv., when the Lord is "as the dew unto Israel, then he revives as the corn, and grows as the vine, and his scent is as the wine of Lebanon. Ezek. xxxvii., when the church is become like the dry bones in the valley, by the wind of the Spirit the dry bones are made to live, and become a great army to fight the battles of the Lord. For low as the interest of Christ is, he can levy a great army for carrying on reformation by the very wind of his mouth. By the rushing of a mighty wind in the day of

Pentecost, the foundation of the New Testament church was laid in the ministry of the apostles, and multitudes daily added to her. O then let us cry, "Awake, O north wind, come, thou south, blow upon the garden" of this withered church, that she may live: "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?"

5. Sometimes he inspirits great men, kings and nobles, to espouse the cause of his fallen tabernacle; thus he moved the spirit of Darius, Cyrus, and Artaxerxes, heathen kings, to be active in rebuilding the temple of God. There is but little appearance of any relief to the church of Christ, from the great folks in our day; but the God of the tabernacle has the hearts of kings, nobles, gentry, and commons in his hand, and he "turns them as the rivers of waters;" and as he has done this in former times, so "his hand is not shortened." And, therefore, let us pray for kings, and all that are in authority, that he may make them nursing fathers to his church, so as to be active for bringing about reformation-work in Scotland, and throughout all Britain and Ireland, according to our solemn league and covenant.

6. Sometimes he rears up his fallen tabernacle in the very blood and sufferings of his witnesses. The foundation of God's tabernacle upon earth, was laid in the sufferings of the head; and very frequently it is rebuilt and reformed, in a day of defection, at the expense of the blood of his members. Thus it has been in Scotland; the work of God comes floating to us in the blood of many of our worthy ancestors; and who knows, but we may be obliged to hand it down with our blood to our posterity? The same persecuting spirit is roaring at this day, that drank the blood of our forefathers, only it is chained up for a little; but how soon the chain may be lengthened, and the reins loosed, we know not; only let all who cleave to the Lord's testimony in Scotland, be ready to say with Paul, "We are ready not to be bound only, but to die for the name of the Lord Jesus."

IV. The *fourth* thing in the method was, to *offer some thoughts respecting the time or day of the Lord's building up the tabernacle of David.* And all I say upon this head, shall be comprised in the few following particulars:—

1. That it is a time which God has kept in his own power, and therefore we should beware of diving with too much curiosity into it. Acts i.—the disciples there, after Christ's resurrection, ask him, "Lord, wilt thou at this time restore the kingdom of Israel?" Which was, upon the matter, all one as if they had said, "Is this the time when the tabernacle of David is to be built up?" What answer gives he them?

Why, although in a little time he was to lay the foundation of the New Testament church, and to build up the tabernacle of David in a glorious manner, yet he answers them, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power;" only he would have them to go fast and pray, and confer together, and in that way to wait for the promise of the Spirit. And, therefore, let us follow our duty without limiting the holy One of Israel, and leave events and times to the Lord: "Secret things belong unto the Lord, but things revealed to us and to our children."

2. When men think the time at hand, and their expectations big, that now the Lord will build up his tabernacle, things frequently take quite another turn, and defeat all their hopes for that season. Thus, Israel, a little after they came out of Egypt, were upon the borders of Canaan: and they imagined, that now was the time for performance of the promise made to Abraham, that his seed should have it for an inheritance; and they could scarcely be restrained from making the attempt immediately: Well, but their time was not God's time; they are sent back from the borders of God's sanctuary, to measure the hills and deserts of the wilderness for forty years, until the carcasses of all that generation, except Caleb and Joshua, had fallen in the wilderness; and then, when that is done, God's time of fulfilling the promise comes. And, therefore, let us beware of being too peremptory. Many a long look did the Old Testament saints give for the Messiah before he came, but the long looked-for came at last in the fulness of time.

3. God's time of building up his tabernacle is commonly when things are brought to the last extremity. This is clear in the text, when the tabernacle is fallen, broken, and ruined, *In that day, saith the Lord, will I build up the tabernacle of David.* When the case of the church appears desperate and hopeless, that is God's usual time of appearing; when the Lord's people are crying, "By whom shall Jacob arise, for he is small?" When there is "no man, no intercessor, then his own arm brings salvation, and his righteousness and veracity it sustains him:" Deut. xxxii. 36: "The Lord will judge his people, and repent himself concerning his servants; when he seeth that their power" (marg. their hand) "is gone, and there is none shut up, or left."

4. God's time of building up his tabernacle is a day of vengeance, and vexation to the wicked and ungodly world, who were crying, "Raze, raze it unto the foundation." The day of Christ's death, which was the day of our redemption by price, was the day of bruising Satan's head; and whenever

Christ sets up his kingdom, Satan's kingdom and government falls down, his works are destroyed by the manifestation of the Son of God; and this is tormenting to Satan, and all that are in his interest. The day of vengeance and the year of the redeemed, go commonly together in scripture, Is. lxiii. 4. "The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come." Is. lxi.—when he proclaims the *acceptable year* of the church's release, he proclaims also the "day of vengeance from our God." Jerusalem's rise is Babylon's ruin. And therefore we need not be surprised though a set of men of a malignant spirit have a jealous eye upon our meeting here this day; for they cannot hear tell of any essay toward a displaying of a banner for Christ, or a work of reformation, in opposition to their own wicked designs against the tabernacle of David.

5. However it be a day of vexation and vengeance to Zion's enemies, yet it is a day of joy and gladness to all Zion's friends and well-wishers: Psal. cxxvi. 2: "Then," (namely, when the Lord turned back the captivity of Zion,) "was our mouth filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing." And ver. 3: "The Lord hath done great things for us: whereof we are glad." And if you ask me, What is it that makes it a day of joy to the friends of Zion, when the Lord builds up the tabernacle of David? I answer, It cannot be otherwise, when we consider, (1.) That it is then a day of light: "The people that sit in darkness, then see great light." Particularly, the light of truth is brought forth unto victory over the darkness of error. (2.) It is a day of much life and liveliness in the Lord's way and work. The Lord quickens the dry bones, and they call on his name; he revives them, and they rejoice in him; they "revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." (3.) It is a day of much spiritual liberty. *The Son makes* them *free*, and they are *free indeed*. Christ, when he rears up the tabernacle of David, proclaims the year of release, "liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison-doors to them that were bound." (4.) It is a day of purging and planting the house of the Lord. He then purges his house of buyers and sellers, intruders and hirelings, and every plant that his right hand hath not planted; and then he sends his people "pastors according to his own heart, whose feet are beautiful upon the mountains, because they preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things." When the Lord thus "clothes his priests with salvation, then his saints shout aloud for joy." (5.) It is the day of Christ's marriage and coronation, in which he *betroths* his church *unto himself for ever*, and gets many new jewels added to his crown; and then the rights of his crown, and liberties of his kingdom, are asserted and

maintained. Cant. iii. 11: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart." Thus much for the *fourth* thing in the method.

V. The *fifth* thing was, to *give the reasons of this doctrine.* Why is it that God, in his own time and way, will build up his fallen and ruined tabernacle?

Answ. 1. Though he will not do it for our sakes, yet he will do it for his own name's sake, that it may not be polluted with the blasphemy of the enemy: Is. xlviii. 9—11: "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should my name be polluted? and I will not give my glory unto another." God's name is *great in Zion,* when he builds his tabernacle: Psal. cii. 16: "When the Lord shall build up Zion, he will appear in his glory."

2. He builds up his fallen tabernacle upon the account of Christ's intercession, the great Angel of the covenant, who interposes on her behalf when she is brought low. Zech. i. 12:—when Jerusalem is lying in rubbish, the Angel of the covenant interposes, saying, "How long, O Lord of hosts, how long wilt thou not have mercy on Jerusalem, and on the cities of Judah, against which thou hast had indignation these threescore and ten years?" Well, the Lord answered the Angel with good and comfortable words, saying particularly, ver. 17: "Thus saith the Lord of hosts, My cities through prosperity shall yet be spread abroad, and the Lord shall yet comfort Zion, and shall yet choose Jerusalem."

3. He will build up his tabernacle, from the sympathy that he hath with his people under oppression. He is "touched with the feeling of their infirmities: and in all their afflictions he is afflicted;" and therefore he sends "the Angel of his presence to save them, in his love and pity he redeems them," Is. lxiii. 9: "The sighing of his prisoners comes up before him:" and, "For the oppression of the poor, and the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord, and set him in safety from him that puffeth at him," Psal. xii. 5.

4. He will do it for his faithfulness' sake engaged in his promise. Here is his promise in the text, *In that day will the Lord build up the tabernacle of David that is fallen,* &c.: and his promise is sure, he will accomplish it in his own time and way; "heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot" of what he hath spoken "shall not fall to the ground."

5. He will build it up, because it is the tabernacle of *David.* And "he will not lie unto David: His seed shall endure for ever, and his throne shall be built up unto all generations," Psal. lxxxix. 3, 4. The "horn of David shall bud, and he

hath ordained a lamp for his anointed: he will clothe his enemies with shame, but upon him shall the crown flourish," Psal. cxxxii. at the close. Thus much for the doctrinal part of the discourse.

VI. The *last* thing I proposed, was the *Application*, which I shall endeavour to discuss in a few *inferences*, having applied as I went along, particularly under the second head of the doctrine.

Inf. 1. See, from what has been said, the love and kindness of God to men on earth. Solomon, the wisest of men, cries out, "Will God in very deed dwell with man upon earth?" Will the high and lofty One, who inhabits eternity, and dwelleth in light that is inaccessible, ever take up lodging with sinful and rebellious men? Well, I say, from what has been said, you see this pozing [puzzling] and silencing question answered; "Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men." Yea, though men ruin and take down his tabernacle, yet he will rebuild and repair it; so fond is he of dwelling with men. All the furniture of grace and glory, that lies in the hand of our great Immanuel, by the pleasure of the Father is intended to prepare a fit lodging for himself with men: Psal. lxviii. 18: when he "ascended up on high, and led captivity captive, he received gifts for men, yea, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among us." Let us admire and adore the love of God in this matter, and cry, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men."

Inf. 2. See hence the obligations that we in this land are under to the Lord, who pitched his tabernacle so early among us, and has allowed it to continue so long, when he never set up or continued it in such a manner in any nation upon earth that I know of, since the coming of Christ in the flesh. Many nations of the earth were never yet enlightened with the beams of the "Sun of righteousness," "the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty." Other places that have been enlightened for awhile, their light was soon put out, and their candlestick removed: witness that of Jerusalem, where the New Testament church was founded at Pentecost; the seven churches of the Lesser Asia, Rome, Corinth, and other places; God has removed his tabernacle from them, and they are become like Shiloh; whereas his gospel-tabernacle has been kept up in Scotland for many hundreds of years, notwithstanding of the utmost efforts of hell to pull it down and destroy it. He has many times threatened in the conduct of his providence, and is at this day threatening sore to remove his tabernacle from us; but O how loath is

he to leave us among the dark places of the earth! his way of working seems to utter that language, Hos. xi. 8: "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim? how shall I deliver thee, Israel? how shall I make thee as Admah? how shall I set thee as Zeboim? my bowels are turned within me; my repentings are kindled together."

Inf. 3. Let every one of us endeavour in our different spheres to be workers together with God in building up the tabernacle of David, which (as you have heard) is broken, and in a fallen and ruinous condition at this day.

To quicken and excite this careless generation to a concern about building the Lord's tabernacle, I offer these few considerations:—

1*st*, It is the tabernacle of David, your great and only King, who has fought our battles for us against the powers of hell. It is he who has slain Goliath, the terror of Israel, he has bruised his head at the expense of his death and blood; and yet shall we not be concerned to build up his tabernacle when it is fallen?

2*dly*, The tabernacle of David is the glory of our land; it is this that makes Zion "the perfection of beauty, the joy of the whole earth;" it is this that makes the church to "look forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners."

3*dly*, The tabernacle of David, is not only the glory, but the safety of a land; it is the very "chariots and horsemen of Israel." His glory in the midst of a church is as a wall of fire about her, and as broad rivers and streams surrounding the city, where no galley with oars nor gallant ship can pass, to harm or molest the inhabitants of the city of God. It was God's tabernacle in the midst of Israel, that struck terror upon all the nations round about, and made Balaam, at the sight thereof, to cry out, "Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, nor divination against Israel."

4*thly*, Consider, that as it is our duty and interest, so we are bound by the oath of God, to upbuild, maintain, and preserve the tabernacle of David against all injuries. Besides personal vows, there are public vows, oaths, and covenants, frequently repeated, lying upon us and our posterity to build up the tabernacle of David, to maintain the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of the church of Scotland, as it is stated in our public standards. And whatever failures, through human weakness and infirmity, there might be either in the composure of these covenants, or yet in their administration, this can never loose us from the oath of God to maintain and carry on a reformation of the church of Christ, antecedently binding by the authority of God in his word. The

Rechabites thought themselves bound to abstain from wine, a thing indifferent in itself, because of their father's oath; and are commended for it.

The rash oath made to the Gibeonites in the days of Joshua was found binding in the days of Saul and David, although it was only the princes of the congregation that swore. The oath of Zedekiah king of Judah to the king of Babylon, a heathen, though prohibited in the law of Moses was found binding; "Shall he break the covenant, and escape?" The bond of any city or community, though made only by those who presently govern, is found binding in law upon their successors in office in the same society. And yet, will any deny that the oath of God, so solemnly sworn by king, nobles, gentry, commons, and persons of all ranks, with uplifted hand to the great God, for maintaining and upholding his tabernacle in the land, is not obligatory upon us their posterity? And therefore, I say, if we do not concur in building the fallen tabernacle of David, according to these oaths, we are guilty, not only of rebellion against the divine authority, but also of perjury.

5thly, Hell and Rome, and all their auxiliaries, are at work to ruin the Lord's tabernacle; and yet shall the friends of Christ be slack-handed to build and uphold it? None more active to ruin and pull down the tabernacle than a set of corrupt clergymen, who by ways and means of their own, have usurped the sacred offices of the tabernacle. We have seen by their acts, and now we may see it in print, a scheme and project laid to ruin the church of Christ into a politic engine for serving the interest of the state, and all the stipends of Scotland into livings for gentlemen's sons; and thus they propose to build the tabernacle of David. But if this was the way of Christ and his apostles it is easy to judge from Matth. xi. 25; 1 Cor. i. 26—28. Now, I say, when men are so active to ruin the Lord's tabernacle, shall not the lovers of Christ be concerned to build it up?

6thly, The curse of God will follow those who do not help to build up the tabernacle of David. The cry seems to be given in the camp of Israel, "Who is on the Lord's side—against the mighty?" You that are idle spectators, and refuse your helping hand, remember that awful word, Judg. v. 23: "Curse ye Meroz, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof: because they came not up to the help of the Lord, to the help of the Lord against the mighty."

7thly, If the tabernacle of David fall, or be lifted from among us, many woes will follow upon it: "Yea, wo also unto them when I depart from them:" nothing but desolation ensues. "Be instructed, O Jerusalem, lest I make thee deso-

late, a land not inhabited. I would have gathered thee," (says Christ to the Jews,) "as the hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not!" and therefore "behold your house is left unto you desolate." Let us but look to Shiloh, and see what the Lord has done there; let us look to the famous churches in the Lesser Asia, the once famous church of Rome; let us look to France, Spain, Germany, and other parts, where the tabernacle of David once flourished, and see what darkness and desolation is there through the removal of the tabernacle; and let these be beacons to warn and guard us against indifference about the concerns of the Lord's tabernacle, and motives to excite us to activity and concern for maintaining and upholding of his tabernacle as in the days of old.

8thly, Let it encourage every friend of Zion to lend their helping hand, that it is God that builds the tabernacle of David, and his faithfulness is engaged in the text to do it. "We are encouraged to "work out" the work of our personal salvation with fear and trembling," under a sense of our own weakness and impotency, because "it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." So let it encourage us to put our hand to the work of the Lord's tabernacle, that it is God that builds the tabernacle of David: "God doth build up Jerusalem, and gather together the dispersed of Israel." If he smile upon our impotent efforts at the work, he will make the work to go on and prosper. It is no matter how insignificant, how few or small the instruments be, if he work with them or by them; for he can make one to chase a thousand, a thousand to put ten thousand to flight. "The battle is not to the strong, nor the race to the swift.—Worm Jacob" in his hand will arise "and thresh the mountains, and beat them small, and make the hills as chaff."

9thly, If we do not help up with the tabernacle of David, we bring the blood of David upon our heads; for the tabernacle was reared at the expense of his blood: and we bring the blood of all our ancestors, who suffered for maintaining of God's tabernacle in the land, upon our head. Yea, we bring the blood of our souls, and the blood of all our posterity, on our head: for if the tabernacle of David fall, and be removed, our own souls perish, and the souls of our posterity, the very means of their salvation being gone out of the land: for "where no vision is, *there* the people perish," says the Lord by Solomon, Prov. xxix. 18.

In order to our successful building of the broken and fallen tabernacle of David, there are these following particulars I would suggest to my reverend brethren at present, to myself, and to all hearing me:—

1. In order to tabernacle-building, it is necessary that every one of us prepare a habitation for the mighty God of Jacob in our hearts. It is scarcely to be supposed that that man who refuses Christ a room in his heart by faith, will ever be very active to build him a tabernacle in the land: and therefore let every one of us comply with that summons, Psal. xxiv. at the close: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in." And then, having given him a habitation in your hearts, provide room for him in your families. You that are heads of families, say as Joshua, Let others do as they please, "as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Let God be worshipped in sincerity morning and evening in your families, and make it your business to instruct your families, children, and servants, in the good ways of the Lord, after the example of Abraham the father of the faithful.

2. In order to our building the tabernacle of the Lord's congregation in the land, it is necessary that we be well acquainted with "the pattern showed in the mount," particularly of the New Testament revelation; and what a length the work was carried in the days of our forefathers, who took themselves and their posterity engaged by solemn covenant to preserve, maintain and carry on that reformation in the land; and what contendings and wrestlings, even unto blood, there have been in that glorious cause. Ignorance of the cause of Christ, as it has been stated from the word of God, both as to doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, and how it has been adopted by solemn oath, makes people to work in the dark, and to dispute and contend about they know not what. And therefore, let us study the testimony of the Lord's witnesses in former times, and what testimonies have been, and may be, emitted against the defections of our own day and generation.

3. Having laid these things as a foundation, it is necessary that, like Elijah, we should be "very zealous for the Lord God of hosts," and his tabernacle in the land. It is said of Christ, when he was purging his temple, and casting out buyers and sellers who profaned it, that "the zeal of his Father's house did eat him up," John ii. 17. Something of this holy zeal should possess all the members of Christ, and all his ministers. There is a generation of Gallios and Laodiceans, who, under the name of moderation, falsely so called, will look upon you as madmen, and hot-headed zealots, and what not? But as fire burns with the greater heat, the colder the climate and weather be; so true zeal will rather be kindled and increased, than cooled and quenched, by such discouragements. Only let your "zeal be according to knowledge,"

founded upon a true acquaintance with the person, natures, and offices, and cause of Christ; for indeed blind zeal does more harm than good: our zeal should be accompanied with the serpent's wisdom, and the dove's simplicity and innocence.

4. In building the tabernacle of David, we had need to count the cost, and to reckon what tabernacle-work may cost us; lay your account with the loss of your name; lay your reputation down at the Lord's feet. As Christ *despised the shame* of the cross in saving us, so must we in following him and his cause. We must lay our account with the loss of our worldly substance, and "take joyfully the spoiling of our goods." Let never your own houses, lands, and riches, be laid in the balance with the building of God's tabernacle; otherwise Christ and you will soon part, like the young man in the gospel, who "went away sorrowful, because he had great possessions." We must lay our account with the loss of our lives in building of the Lord's tabernacle: many a life has gone for it in Scotland; and, if it need our lives also, we must be ready to part with them, rather than quit the Lord's tabernacle, Rev. xii. 11.

5. "Come not nigh unto the tents of these wicked men," who usurp upon the priesthood and service of the tabernacle without the Lord's call, and who are active in carrying on a defection from the attained to reformation of the Lord's tabernacle in Scotland. The countenance and encouragement given them by professed friends of Christ, hardens and fortifies them in their way and method; such are partakers of their sin. It is the express command of God, from such to "withdraw, who walk not according to the tradition we have received:" and therefore every one that wishes well to the Lord's tabernacle should say of such, as Jacob said of Simeon and Levi, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assemblies, mine honour, be not thou united; for the instruments of wickedness and cruelty are in their habitations."

6. Unite with all ministers or Christians who are endeavouring honestly in their sphere to build up the tabernacle of David. It is a sore matter, and looks ominous, when the real friends of the tabernacle come to be divided among themselves. Although we be commanded to separate from tabernacle-destroyers, yet we are not any where commanded to separate from tabernacle-builders, who "keep the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless," and are, according to their sphere and situation, endeavouring to promote the public cause of David our King, and opposing his enemies. "He that is not against us, is with us." Let us stu-

dy to be with all those that are with Christ, or upon his side, and his covenanted cause in the land; but especially with those that stand as it were in front of the battle, and against whom the strength of the enemy is levelled.

7. Pray and wrestle much at the throne of grace that God may come and work the work himself; for "Except the Lord build the house, the builders build in vain." O pray, that the cloud of his presence may rest upon the tabernacle; that his Spirit may be poured out from on high upon king, nobles, gentry, commons, ministers and people; and then the building of the tabernacle will go on apace.

8. *Lastly*, Let every one attempt, through grace, the reformation of his own heart and life, and to have a walk like those who believe that the God of the tabernacle is in the midst of us. Israel were obliged to guard against all moral and ceremonial uncleanness, because "the holy One of Israel was in the midst of them;" so let us study to act and walk, as in the sight of that God who "searcheth Jerusalem as with lighted candles." "Be ye holy, as he that hath called you is holy." The untender walk of professors is a reproach to the God of the tabernacle, and causes the enemy to blaspheme. Let the laws of the tabernacle, particularly those of the moral law, as a rule of obedience, be "a light unto your feet, and a lamp unto your paths." "And as many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be on them, and mercy, and upon all the Israel of God."

SERMON XXX.

THE ANNALS OF REDEEMING LOVE, WITH THE REDEEMER'S VENGEANCE UPON THE GRAND ENEMY OF THE REDEEMED.*

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—Is. LXIII. 4.

THE FIRST SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

To gain time, I wave the connexion, and just come to the words themselves, which I take up as a material repetition of the first promise, Gen. iii. 15: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent:" which words are an express threatening of wrath and vengeance unto the old serpent and his seed; but at the same time, a promise of salvation implied unto the woman and her seed. It is as if the Lord had said to Satan, Thou hast indeed ruined Adam and his posterity at one stroke; but remember I will be avenged on thee for what thou hast done; in the fulness of time I am to take on the human nature, and, in and by that nature which thou hast ruined, I will bruise thy head, and ruin thy kingdom. So says the Lord here, "The day of vengeance is in mine heart," &c. As if he had said, I cannot forget the old quarrel I have with Satan for ruining the woman and her seed, it is still fresh in my view: I will surely pursue it to the destruction of Satan, and the redemption of my people. So, then, you may take up the words in these few particulars:—

1. We have here the name or designation of God's remnant of mankind-sinners, they are called his redeemed, *my redeemed:* they are mine by election, mine by my Father's donation, mine by the purchase of my blood, and they are to be mine by conquest; their redemption plainly supposes them to be in bondage to sin and Satan. It is observable, that they are called *The redeemed of the Lord*, though the the price of their redemption was not yet paid; many hundreds of years intervened before the actual payment of the ransom, and yet it is spoken of as a thing done, because it was a thing already acted in the purpose of the Father,

* Several sermons preached at sacramental and other occasions.

and in the promise of the Son from all eternity: for the same reason Christ is called "a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world."

2. In the words we may notice the deep resentment that the glorious Redeemer has of the quarrel of the redeemed; *The day of vengeance*, says he, *is in my heart.* Perhaps, indeed, there may be here a reference immediately to the vengeance that God was to inflict by Cyrus upon the Babylonian empire, for the hard usage Israel had received from them during their seventy years' captivity; but ultimately it has a respect to the vengeance the Son of God was to take in the fulness of time upon Satan, that destroyer of mankind; he speaks here in the capacity of our kinsman. According to the tenor of the law of Moses, the nearest of kin was to be the avenger of his kinsman's blood: so Christ here as our Goel, our brother, our elder brother, bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh, espouses our quarrel against the enemy, and destroys the destroyer: *The day of vengeance is in my heart*, it is *in my heart*, that is to say, I have purposed it, I have promised it, and the resolution is firmly seated in my soul, and the very thought of it is a pleasure and delight to me, "Thy law is within my heart," Psal. xl. 8.

3. In the words we have the stated time for the deliverance of the redeemed; it is called a *day* in the beginning of the verse, and a *year* at the end of it. A day and a year are one thing with the Lord; yea, a thousand years are as one day, and one day as a thousand years with him, being from everlasting to everlasting God, without any variableness or shadow of turning: only this, perhaps, may be in it, the time of mercy to the redeemed may be called a *year*, and the time of vengeance a *day*, because justice is his "strange work, his strange act," and therefore despatches it in a little time, makes short work with it; but mercy is a work in which he delights, and therefore he protracts, and draws it out to a far greater length; "his mercy is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him." Whatever be in this, yet the period of time here pointed at, by the day of vengeance, and the year of the redeemed, is especially the fulness of time, when "God sent forth his Son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

4. We may notice the Redeemer's pleasure and satisfaction with the view of all this, he speaks of it with a particular air of joy and triumph: *The day of vengeance is in my*

heart, and the year of my redeemed is come. He, as it were, anticipates the scene, and acts it over in his own heart before the time be fully come, he relishes it in his own mind, and rejoices in it, as come already, because now it was near at hand. Thus you see, that this text has a twofold aspect; it has a favourable and kindly aspect upon the redeemed of the Lord; but it has a frowning and terrible aspect upon the serpent and his seed.

OBSERVE, "That as the year of the redeemed is the joy of the great Redeemer; so he has the stated time for avenging their quarrel in his heart." *The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.*

Method (through divine assistance) shall be this:—
I. To speak a little of the great Redeemer.
II. Of the redeemed.
III. Of the year of the redeemed.
IV. Inquire on whom their quarrel is to be avenged.
V. Of the day of vengeance, and the execution of it.
VI. Make it appear, that all this was, and still is, the joy of the Redeemer's heart.
VII. Apply the whole.

1. The *first* thing is, to *speak a little of the great and glorious Redeemer.* And here I shall only answer, in short, two or three questions that may be asked respecting him. And,

1. It may be asked, as the church does in the 1st verse, "Who is this that cometh from Edom and Bozrah, to avenge our quarrel, and set us free from the hand of our enemies?" It is fit, in this day of blasphemy and reproach in our valley of vision, to tell you, that our Goel, the avenger of our blood, is none other than "God manifested in the flesh;" and every one that ever saw him, will be ready to cry out with Thomas, "My Lord, and my God." Who is he? say you. Sirs, I tell you, that he is "the great God:" Tit. ii. 13: "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ." He is "the true God;" 1 John v. 20: "He hath given us an understanding to know him that is true; and we are in him that is true, that is, in his Son Jesus Christ. This is the true God, and eternal life." He is "God over all, blessed for evermore," Rom. ix. 5. He is the eternal God; for "his goings forth were of old, from everlasting." He is the omnipresent God, who "fills heaven and earth;" for though he be ascended to heaven, and is to continue there, as to his human nature, till the time of the restitution of all things, yet he is still here on earth,

and every where as to his divinity: "Lo," says he, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." He is the omniscient God: "I am he that searcheth the heart and the reins;" and he needeth not that any should testify of man, for he knoweth what is in man. He is the independent and self-existent God, for he is *the first*, and he also is *the last*, Rev. i. 17: "He is before all things, and by him all things consist; he is the beginning, and in all things he must have the pre-eminence, Col. i. 17, 18. He is the immutable and unchangeable God, "without any variableness or shadow of turning;" "The heavens shall wax old as a garment; and as a vesture he shall change them, and they shall be changed: but he is the same, and of his years there is no end," Heb. i. 12; Heb. xiii. 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." He is the very same God, numerically one with the Father: "I and my Father are one." "There are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit: and these three are one:" the same in substance, equal in power and glory. Now this is our Redeemer, "This is our friend, O daughters of Jerusalem;" this is he that "speaks in righteousness, mighty to save." O sirs, see if you can call him *Lord* in a way of believing, by the Holy Spirit; for every tongue must confess that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father; however others may blaspheme him, as if he were only an inferior deity, let us ever think and speak honourably of him; for "he is thy Lord, and worship thou him;" and all men must honour him, as they honour the Father.

2. If it be asked again, what is the birth and pedigree of this Redeemer? from whom is he descended? I answer, "Who can declare his generation?" View him in his divine nature, "He is the only begotten of the Father; the brightness of his Father's glory, and the express image of his person;" and so like his Father, that he who hath seen him, hath seen the Father also. But as for the manner of his eternal generation, who can declare it? It will remain an inexplicable mystery, till the day of glory declare it. View him as to his human nature, he is the promised seed of the woman; the seed of Abraham, in whom "all the nations of the earth are blessed;" he is sprung of ancient kings, in the royal family of David; in him David's family terminated, in him David's throne and kingdom is to be perpetuated for ever. But if you still ask, How was he generated, as man? I answer, even as to this, "Who can declare his generation?" This also is a mystery; for, like Melchizedek, his type, he is without father as to his human, and without a mother as to his divine nature. All that we can tell you about this, is only,

that he was conceived by the power of the Holy Ghost, in the womb of the virgin Mary, and born of her without sin. Thus, you see what is the birth and pedigree of our glorious Redeemer. O sirs, you need not be ashamed to own him, for he is the credit of all his kin, he is the credit of his Father's family, for his Father glories in him, and shows him in a way of triumph and gloriation to the wide world, crying, Is. xlii. 1: "Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth:" and if he be the credit of his Father's family, much more is he the credit of Adam's family; in him the human nature recovers its crown of glory and dignity to a vast advantage, which was lost by the sin of our first parents; and "in him shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory."

3. If you ask again, with relation to this Redeemer, the avenger of our blood, How is he called, what is his name? I answer, as the Angel did to Manoah, Judg. xiii. 18: "Why askest thou after my name, seeing it is secret?" or *wonderful*, as in the margin. It is like "the white stone, and new name," that no man knows, but he that is taught of God; for "flesh and blood cannot reveal it, but only our Father which is in heaven." However, "the Spirit which searcheth all things, yea, even the deep things of God," has given us some hints of his names, every one of which is like ointment poured forth to them that can read and understand them in the light of the Spirit.

1*st*, Then, his name alone is JEHOVAH, *Most High over all the earth:* Jer. xxiii. 6: "This is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU, The Lord our righteousness." Well may we call him by that name, when the angels, the cherubims and seraphims of the higher house, who stand continually in his presence, cover their faces with their wings, when they see him upon his throne, high and lifted up, crying, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts, JEHOVAH-ZABAOTH: These things spake Esaias, when he saw his glory," John xii. 41, compared with Is. vi. 3.

2*dly*, Another letter of his name you have, Exod. iii. 14: "Go," says he to Moses, "and tell them, I AM hath sent me unto you, I AM THAT I AM;" which is just an explication of the name JEHOVAH, and says, that he is the very fountain of all being and blessedness, that is, self-existent, independent God, who "hath faithfulness for the girdle of his reins, and righteousness for the girdle of his loins." And that he who appeared to Moses by this name, is none other than Christ the glorious Messiah, is clear, by comparing that passage with Acts vii. 32.

3*dly*, His name is *Immanuel, God with us*, Matth. i. 23. He

is not only a God in our nature, but God on our side, God avenging our quarrel. But if "the Lord of hosts be with us, and the God of Jacob our refuge," what have we to fear? "Fear not, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, yea, I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

4*thly*, His name is, *The Word of God:* Rev. xix. 13. He "hath his vesture dipt in blood, and his name is called The Word of God." He is "the Alpha and Omega" of the written word; all the lines of the Bible centre in him. And as a man gives his command by his word; so by this Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the hosts of them by the breath of his mouth. As a man brings out the thoughts of his heart by his words; so, by Christ, the eternal counsels of the heart of God concerning our redemption are opened and brought to light, for he it is that "opens the book, and looses the seven seals thereof."

5*thly*, His name is, *The King of kings, and the Lord of lords:* and this name is written upon his thigh and his vesture, Rev. xix. 16. All the powers of the earth are only his vassels, for he is "the Prince of the kings of the earth:" "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice." But what do I speak of the powers of the earth?—the powers of heaven bow at the name of Jesus. He is the head of all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that can be named, whether in this world, or that which is to come." Many other names he gets in scripture, upon which I cannot now dwell. His name is, "Jesus, a Saviour;" his name is "Messiah, or Christ the anointed;" his name is "The Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world;" his name is "The Branch of the Lord, who is beautiful and glorious;" his name is "The Shepherd of Israel, who leadeth Joseph as a flock;" his name is "the Prince of life," "the Plant of renown." See a cluster of his glorious names together, Is. ix. 6: "Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the everlasting Father, The Prince of peace."—Thus you see what is our great Redeemer's name, or how he is called.

4. What are his qualities as a Redeemer?

Answ. 1*st*, He is a chosen Redeemer: Is. xlii. 1. He is *mine elect.* He was chosen as the only fit person in heaven or earth, for managing that great undertaking of our redemption: "I was set up," says he, "from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." And we find God the Father glorying in the choice, Psal. lxxxix. 19: "I have laid help upon one that is mighty: I have exalted one chosen out

of the people. I have found David my servant." O, sirs, let the Father's choice be your choice also.

2*dly*, He is a strong and mighty Redeemer: "I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save. I have laid help upon one that is mighty." He is the true Samson, that carries away the gates of our spiritual prison, and who slays our spiritual enemies heaps upon heaps, with weapons which, to us, would appear as unsuitable as the jaw-bone of an ass, for "through death, he destroyed him that had the power of death."

3*dly*, He is a Redeemer of great authority; for "he rules in Jacob, and to all the ends of the earth." The government is laid upon his shoulder; not only the government of the church, but the government of the world, for the church's sake; "he hath given him to be head over all things to the church." His authority is absolute; for "he doth whatever pleases him in the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." His authority is irresistible; every creature must bow to him; he "strikes through kings in the day of his wrath." His authority is perpetual; for "his kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there is no end.

4*thly*, He is an opulent and wealthy Redeemer. He was fully capable to redeem the inheritance for his poor kindred; and whatever justice demanded of him, he told it down to the uttermost farthing. O sirs, our Goel, our kinsman, is the Heir of all things, all the immense treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him; unsearchable riches, all the plenitude of the Deity dwells bodily in him.

5*thly*, He is a matchless and incomparable Redeemer. He is not to be paralleled among all the inhabitants of the higher or lower house. He has obtained a more excellent name than men or angels: "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood." Matchless in his person as Immanuel; matchless in his perfections, being "the brightness of his Father's glory:" matchless in his love, for he died out of love to his very enemies; his love made him wade through the deep ocean of his Father's wrath; yea, like Jonah, to cast himself into the sea of vengeance, that we might not be swallowed up in it for ever.

6*thly*, He is a resolute and courageous Redeemer. He was not afraid to encounter all the powers and armed legions of hell; no, no, *The day of vengeance*, says he, *is in mine heart:* he set his face like a flint against the storm of his Father's wrath, and of the rage of men and devils that blew directly in his face, when he came upon the work of our redemption; "He did not faint nor was discouraged, till he had set judgment in the earth; he "came from Edom and Bozrah, tra-

velling in the greatness of his strength," saying, "I will tread them down in mine anger, I will trample them in my fury." Thus you see some of his excellent qualities as a Redeemer. And so much shall serve for the *first* thing, which was to give some little account of the Redeemer.

II. The *second* thing proposed was, to *speak a little of the redeemed: The year of my redeemed is come.* And here, again, two or three questions may be moved concerning them.

1. Who are they that are here called the redeemed? *Answ.* In a word, they are a select company of the lost race and posterity of Adam, chosen by the Father, and given by him to the Son, before the foundations of the world were laid, that in due time he might redeem and deliver them from that wo and wrath to which they lay exposed, for the breach and violation of the divine law, or covenant of works, and whom he engaged to call effectually, to justify, sanctify, and at length to bring to eternal glory in the enjoyment of God for ever. So that you see Christ did not spend the price of his blood, or travail of his soul, for the fallen angels, but for fallen man; "He took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham:" neither did he redeem all mankind, by paying a ransom for every individual, but for those whom the Father gave him out of Adam's family: "I lay down my life," says he, "for my sheep," not for the goats, but "for the sheep." "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me out of the world; for they are thine," John xvii. 9.

2. You told us of the Redeemer's descent and pedigree; what is the pedigree of the redeemed, how are they descended? *Answ.* Although the redeemed be honourably descended; yet they, by their natural generation, are a base-born company, being descended and sprung of Adam, and so "are the degenerate plant of a strange vine," of the same common mass of corruption with the reprobate world who perish for ever, "Children of wrath, and heirs of hell, as well as others." The children of Israel were taught to sing that melancholy and mournful ditty, "A Syrian ready to perish was my father;" and the Lord tells them, Ezek. xvi. 3: "Thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite." Oh sirs, you and I, whatever our immediate parents were, whether they were gracious or graceless, whether they were rich or poor, noble or ignoble; yet, considering us as the posterity of the first Adam, we may derive our pedigree from hell: "Ye are of your father the devil," says Christ to the Jews, who made their boast that they had Abraham to their father. But yet the redeemed of the Lord, though they be thus basely de-

scended by natural generation, yet by their new birth, or regeneration, they are nobly descended; "they are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God: To as many as received him, to them gave he power, or *right*, to become the sons of God."

3. If you ask, with what price has Christ redeemed them? the apostle Peter answers this question, 1 Pet. i. 18, 19: "We are not redeemed with corruptible things, such as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot." No less a price than that of blood would do the business; for "without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin:" and it was no ordinary blood that would do it, but the best blood of the whole creation, even the blood of the immaculate Lamb of God; and what valuable blood this is, will appear, if we take either an absolute or comparative view of it. (1.) View it absolutely, it is the blood of God, as it is called, Acts xx. 28: "Feed the flock of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." And it is so called, because of the personal union between the man Christ Jesus and the second person of the glorious Trinity, by virtue of which, he is Immanuel, God-man in one person. O what a valuable ransom must this be! It is the blood of him who is "the man of God's right hand, who is in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God." It is, indeed, royal blood that is the ransom of our souls, the blood of him who is "The mighty God, The everlasting Father, and The Prince of peace." (2.) Let us view this blood comparatively (as I was saying just now,) it is the best blood of the whole creation. The blood of a man is more valuable than the blood of a beast, because man was made after the image of God; the blood of the saints is more valuable than the blood of other men, because the image of God, which was lost by the fall, is impressed upon them by regenerating and sanctifying grace; hence we are told, that "precious in the sight of the Lord is the death," or blood, "of his saints." O then how precious must his blood be, who is "the express image of the Father, and the brightness of his glory!" What is the blood of a creature, in respect of the blood of the ever-blessed Creator! Although all the angels in heaven, men on earth, and devils in hell, yea, the whole frame of nature had been offered up in sacrifice, they could never have satisfied justice, or expiated the guilt of the least sin; no, no, nothing less than a ransom of infinite value could do it. "The redemption of the soul is precious, and would have ceased for ever," unless the Son of God had "poured out his soul" for us. Thus you see what is the price with which they are redeemed.

4. If it be asked, 'What relation do the redeemed stand in to the Redeemer?—for here he speaks of them as his in a way of eminence, *The year of my redeemed is come;*—I answer, We find him in scripture asserting his claim to them under a manifold relation. Sometimes we find him calling them his *people*, as in the 8th verse of this chapter. And "he said, Surely they are my people, children that will not lie: and so he was their Saviour." Sometimes he calls them his *servants:* "Where I am," says he, "there shall also my servants be." Sometimes he calls them his *friends:* "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you." Sometimes his *seed:* Is. liii. 10: "He shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand." Sometimes his *brethren:* and "he is not ashamed to call them brethren," having taken part of the children's flesh. Sometimes his *spouse* and *bride*, as you see frequently in the song of Solomon. Sometimes he calls them his *jewels:* "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in the day that I make up my jewels." Sometimes his *portion:* "The Lord's people are his portion, and Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." Sometimes his *crown* and his *ornament;* "Thou shalt be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." Sometimes his *glory:* a very strange expression! "I have placed salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." Thus you see that he asserts his interest in them under manifold relations.—So much concerning the Redeemer, and the redeemed. I proceed now to,

III. The *third* thing proposed, which was, to *speak a little of the year of the redeemed.* But before I enter on it we shall sing.

THE ANNALS OF REDEEMING LOVE, WITH THE REDEEMER'S VENGEANCE UPON THE GRAND ENEMY OF THE REDEEMED.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—Is. LXIII. 4.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

III. The *third* thing proposed was, to *speak of the year of the redeemed.* Whether there be a literal respect in the words to the year of jubilee, or the year of the release of Israel from their captivity in Babylon, after seventy years' bondage, I shall not contend: I take it here in its spiritual and ultimate meaning, as pointing at the time of our redemption by Christ Jesus. And here I will tell you of a five-fold notable year of the redeemed: 1. There is the year of purposed redemption. 2. The year of purchased redemption. 3. The year of exhibited redemption. 4. The year of applied redemption. And, 5. The year of consummated redemption. These are five notable years, and many great and glorious things were and are to be done in every one of them.

First, I say, there is the year of redemption by ordination or purpose. And this is such an ancient year, that it never had a beginning, the glorious frame and plan of our redemption being laid in the heart of God from eternity, before ever the foundations of the world were laid: with respect to this year, Christ is called "a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." If it be asked, What were the principal occurrences of this year?

Answ. 1. This year electing and everlasting love lighted upon the redeemed, when he saw them in his own decree lying in their blood: Ezek. xvi. 6: "And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live: yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live. And, ver. 8: "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love." O, is not this a great matter, a wonderful occurrence, that from the ancient years of eternity God passed by the fallen angels, and pitched his love upon a company of poor sinners of Adam's family, who were like the new-born

infant, cast out into the open field, wallowing in its native blood and filth, without hope, without help, without strength, beauty, or any thing else to commend them to him! Oh, let heaven and earth wonder at that strange word, Jer. xxxi. 3: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with everlasting kindness have I drawn thee," from the ancient years of eternity.

2. This year of everlasting love, the grand council of peace was called in heaven among the persons of the adorable Trinity; where the affair under consideration was, how Satan's usurped kingdom in this world might be sapt and overturned; and in order to this, how sinners of Adam's family might be saved, in a consistency with the honour of the divine law and justice, sovereignty, and other attributes. A question which would have nonplussed a general assembly of angels, and put them to an everlasting stand. "How shall I put them among the children?" is a query which we must leave to God himself, and his infinite wisdom and grace, only to answer.

3. This year the happy overture was made, and agreed to in the council of peace, that the second person of the glorious and adorable Trinity, the only begotten Son of God, should, in the fulness of time, assume the nature of man, take his place in law, and act the part of a Saviour for lost sinners, and, by his obedience to the death, fulfil the law, satisfy justice, "finish transgression, make an end of sin," and do every thing requisite for their salvation, and the ruin of Satan's kingdom. That this was agreed, and gone into, appears from what we have, Psal. xl. 6—8: "Burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law," this law of redemption, "is within my heart." How did the heart of our glorious Immanuel leap in his breast when the overture was made? *Lo! I come*, &c. With what pleasure does he speak of it, Prov. viii. 23: "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was! I rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and my delights were with the sons of men!"

4. In this year it was agreed upon, and finally ended, that the eternal Son, God coequal with the Father, should come under a new-covenant relation to his own Father, and that he, as head of the new covenant, should have the right to eternal life, and all the blessings of the covenant subservient to it, settled in his own person; that so, having the right in his person, he might give it "unto as many as the Father had given him." It was with a view to this new-covenant right with his own Father, that it was prophesied of him, Psal.

lxxxix. 26: "He shall cry unto me, Thou art my Father, my God, and the Rock of my salvation." And upon this new-covenant conveyance, he tells his disciples, when he was about to ascend into glory, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God."

5. It was agreed upon this year, that the whole power and strength of the eternal Father, yea, the whole power of the glorious Trinity, should be forthcoming to our glorious Redeemer, for his support and through-bearing in his glorious undertaking of man's redemption: "He is my servant, whom I uphold, saith the Lord. With him my hand shall be established: mine arm also shall strengthen him," Psal. lxxxix. 21. Therefore Christ is called "the man of God's right hand." As, also, it was agreed, that "the fulness of the Godhead should dwell in him bodily;" that he should "receive the Spirit above measure," to fit, furnish, and qualify him for his undertaking: "I will put my Spirit upon him, and he shall bring forth judgment unto the Gentiles."

6. This year it was agreed, that "the pleasure of the Lord should prosper in his hand," that he should be successful in his undertaking, mauger all the opposition that either hell or earth should be capable to raise against him; for this end he engaged that his hand should be upon the man of his right hand, whom he had made strong for himself;" that he would "make his enemies his footstool," and "strike through kings in the day of his wrath, and plague all these that hated him." Many other things I might name, as transacted in this year of our redemption by ordination; but if I should insist here, I might anticipate all that was transacted in the following years, because whatever occurred in them was fixed upon and determined this first year of redemption. And therefore I proceed to a

Second year of the redeemed, and that is, the year of our redemption by purchase or impetration; under which period I comprehend the whole time that the Son of God sojourned in this lower world in our nature, till he ascended again into glory. "This was the acceptable year of the Lord," for which the Old Testament saints so much longed; this was the day which Abraham saw afar off, and was glad when he saw it. If it be asked, What were the transactions of this year? I answer, Great things were done this year, yea, wonderful without number. I shall only instance in a few.

1. This year the great God was incarnate: "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." Sirs, what think you of this piece of strange news? Were your souls never affected with it? Whatever you may think of it, yet Paul, the great apostle of the Gentiles, rehearses it as a matter of the

highest wonder, 1 Tim. iii. 16: "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh." And Heaven thought it a matter of so great moment, that so soon as ever this year commenced, a messenger was despatched from the throne of glory to notify it to the shepherds, saying, Luke ii. 10, "I bring you good tidings of great joy: for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And immediately a multitude of the heavenly host begin their song of praise, crying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will towards men." "The morning stars sang together, and shouted for joy," crying, "Glory to God in the highest," when the foundation stone of our redemption was laid. O sirs, let heaven and earth, angels and men, wonder at what God has done for us! The great Creator became a creature, "the Ancient of days" became an infant, and "made of a woman;" here is a mystery of wisdom, grace, and love, that may make us cry, "O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

2. This year the great Lawgiver, whose will is a law to angels and men, voluntarily subjected himself to his own law, and that in the room and stead of rebels, who had violated his law, and contemned his authority: Gal. iv. 4, 5: "In the fulness of time God sent forth his son made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons." O sirs, had ever the law such a subject! No, no; here is the Creator made under the law given to the creature; hence it was, that his obedience to the law reflected a glory and honour upon the law, which it never had before, and which the obedience of men and angels, though ever so perfect, could not have done: Is. xlii. 21: "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honourable."

3. This year "God blessed for ever" was "made a curse;" and he who "is of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity," "was made sin:" Gal. iii. 13: "He hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." And, 2 Cor. v. 21: "He was made sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." O were not these strange and remarkable events! "Shall it not be said in Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought!"

4. This year everlasting righteousness was brought in for the justification of ungodly sinners. Sirs, immediately upon Adam's fall, by the breach of the first covenant, sin entered into the world; and that moment that sin entered into the

world righteousness went quite out of the world, so that there was "none righteous, no not one." But this year Christ the Son of God brought it again into the world, by his obedience to the death; "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

5. This year God actually laid the foundation of a throne of grace, in "justice and judgment," and of the house of mercy, which "shall be built up for ever." God intended to rear up a new house of mercy for miserable sinners, upon the ruins of the broken covenant of works; and Christ himself is the first stone of the building: Is. xxviii. 16: "Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone; and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Indeed, this stone was rejected by the Jewish builders, but God has made it "the chief stone of the corner;" and "other foundation can no man lay: "This is the Lord's doing, and it is wondrous in our eyes."

6. This year the veil of the temple was rent from the top to the bottom, and the way to the holiest was opened by the blood of Jesus. Immediately upon the fall of man, the door of access to God and glory was shut, and bolted against Adam and all his posterity; this was signified by the cherubims with the flaming sword, turning every way to guard our access to the tree of life. But by "the blood of Jesus, a new and living way is opened, which is consecrated for us;" and by this new way we have entered with boldness. "I am the door," says Christ: "by me, if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

7. This year sin was finished, and transgression ended in a way of satisfaction, insomuch that the uttermost farthing of debt, that we owed to divine justice for sin, was paid down in the red gold of a Redeemer's blood. This Christ testified in his dying words; he cried out, *It is finished*: and thereupon "bowed the head, and gave up the ghost." And upon Christ's uttering of that word, "sin was condemned in the flesh" of the Son of God, and "the hand-writing that was against us," even our debt-bond to justice, was cancelled and torn, he having "nailed it to his cross."

8. This year the covenant of grace, or the testament of Christ, was confirmed and made sure by his blood: Dan. ix. 27: "He shall confirm the covenant with many." "The testament is now of force since the Testator's death," as the apostle argues, Heb. ix. The death and blood of Jesus has given such a validity to his latter will contained in this blessed Bible, that we may pursue for the goods of the testament

with boldness at a throne of grace, and do it "with full assurance of faith."

9. This year "the sacrifice and oblation was made to cease," the Mosaic economy was unhinged: all the shadows of the Jewish ceremonies fled away, Christ the substance of them all being come.—Not to insist upon particulars: This year the Prince of life was incarcerated for our debt, died and came under the power of death for a time. This year he was "justified in the Spirit, taken from prison and from judgment," and fully discharged of our debt, which he had undertaken to pay. This year he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead." This year God was declared to be a *God of peace*, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead: and this year the foundation of a lively hope was laid for us, even the hope of "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away." This year a whole elect world was raised from the dead in their glorious representative; he having drunk of the brook in the way, immediately he lifted up the head in his resurrection, and our heads were lifted up in him. This year "God went up with a shout," (I mean God in our nature,) yea, God "with the sound of a trumpet;" and "when he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, even for the rebellious, that the Lord God might dwell among them." O sirs, God is ascended in our nature, and sitting upon the throne of glory, swaying the sceptre of heaven; and he is wearing our nature in glory, as a pledge that we shall follow him, for the human body was assumed for the sake of the mystical. Thus you see what great events happened in the year of our redemption by purchase. "Let songs be heard from this end of the earth," at the hearing of this joyful sound, "even glory to the righteous."

Thirdly, A *third* year of the redeemed, is the year of exhibited redemption; by which I understand, the year of a gospel-dispensation among a people. This is sometimes called also a *day* in scripture: "O that thou hadst known in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace!" says the Lord to Jerusalem. If it be asked, What are the great transactions of this year? *Answ.* Great things are done for the redeemed this year also. Only, before I proceed to particulars, I would have you to remember, that redemption in this situation of it, or considered in its revelation or exhibition, is a thing common to all the hearers of the gospel. Here we are to abstract from the secret decrees of election and reprobation, and to make open proclamation of redeeming grace and love in Christ to every creature under heaven; we are to tell

every man and woman sprung of Adam, this good news, That "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them;" that "the promise is unto you, and to your seed, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call" by the sound of the gospel. O sirs, "secret things belong unto the Lord, but things that are revealed belong unto us, and to our children:" and therefore let alone this secret of election or reprobation, as pertaining to God; do not invade his property, but hearken to things revealed, things brought to light by the glorious gospel; for things belong to you, and "to you is the word of this salvation sent," and therefore intermeddle with it with the greatest freedom by faith; it is no presumption for us to claim what (God says) "belongs to us, and to our children."

Now, this premised, I come to tell you of some great things that are done in this year of exhibited and revealed redemption, which you and I at this moment enjoy, you in hearing, and I in preaching. The great things done in this period are so many, that I can only point at them.

1. Then, This year "the people that sat in darkness" are made to "see great light, and to them that sat in the regions of the shadow of death, light is made to spring up." And, O! is it not matter of praise, that this is the privilege of Scotland at this day? The time was, when the gross darkness of Pagan and Popish error and idolatry overspread our land; but "the day-spring from on high hath visited us," and "brought life and immortality to light;" the temple of God is opened, and the ark of his testament may be seen, "the veil is rent," "the face of the covering is destroyed," I mean, as to the objective revelation, and the mysteries which were hid from ages and generations are now made manifest.

2. This year of exhibited redemption a throne of grace is reared, a court of grace erected, and liberty granted to every man who finds himself condemned in the court of conscience, in the court of the law or justice, to carry his cause by an appeal; which, if he do, he is sure to "find grace and mercy to help him in time of need." O sirs, know your own privilege. Art thou saying within thy breast, If God "mark mine iniquity," according to the tenor of his holy law, "I cannot stand?" I am condemned already, and the wrath of God is pursuing me? Well, I tell you for certainty, the court of grace stands open to you, and if you will carry your cause there, though it be ever so desperate, the cause is won; for all the acts and interlocutors of this court are acts of grace, acts of indemnity and oblivion; for the name of him who sits on the throne is, "The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious,

pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin." "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thine iniquities for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

3. This year the batteries of heaven are reared up against the gates of hell. Error, ignorance, unbelief, atheism, pride, profanity, security, and the like evils, are the strong-holds of the devil's kingdom, by which he secures sinners in his service. Now, by the dispensation of the gospel, God's batteries are mounted against these, all the ordinances of the gospel, particularly the preaching of the word, is calculated for casting these strong-holds to the ground. 2 Cor. x. 4: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong-holds," &c.

4. This year "the fountains of the great deep" of the love of God toward a lost and perishing world "are broken up;" I mean his love in sending of his only begotten Son upon the glorious errand of our redemption: John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." What is the great business of gospel-ministers, but to represent to sinners "the excellency of this loving-kindness," that so "the sons of men may put their trust under the shadow of his wings?"

5. This year God reveals and brings near his righteousness and salvation, even to them who are stout-hearted and far from righteousness; Is. xlvi. 12, 13: "Hearken unto me, ye stout-hearted, that are far from righteousness. I bring near my righteousness: it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; behold, I will place salvation in Zion for Israel my glory." O sirs, we tell you it for good news this year, that "he who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in him; and that he is become "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

6. This year "the tree of life, which grows in the midst of the paradise of God, shakes his fruit, which is for the feeding, and his leaves, which are for the healing of the nations." And many a ripe cluster of fruit, many a healing leaf of sound doctrine has been dropped in this very place; happy they who by the hand of faith have gathered and applied them. You who have not yet gathered, will you fall to work yet, gather and glean in the field of our blessed Boaz, our Kinsman and Redeemer, and you will "find his fruits sweet to your taste," and his words, if you "eat them," to be "the joy and rejoicing of your heart."

7. This year Jacob's ladder is set up in Bethel, by which we may scale heaven, and recover that glory and happiness

from which we fell by the sin of the first Adam. The gospel shows to us "the path of life," a stair by which we may ascend to those regions of bliss and glory that are above; and the lower part of this ladder of communication stands at every man's foot, inviting him, as at it were, to take the benefit of it. "I am," says Christ, "the way, the truth, and the life." "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture."

8. This year the pure river of water of life issues forth from the throne of God and of the Lamb, and runs in the very streets of the city of God, I mean of the visible church, and a voice comes forth from heaven, crying, "Whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely." "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy and eat, yea come, buy wine and milk without money and without price."

9. This year the doors of God's banqueting-house are opened, and the manna falls about the camp of the visible church. He "makes unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." This year that scripture is fulfilled, Prov. ix. 1—5.

10. This year the gates of the city of refuge are cast wide open, the ways and avenues to it are cleared, stumbling-blocks are removed, and a cry made to self-destroying sinners, who are under the arrest of law and justice, "Turn ye to your strong-holds, ye prisoners of hope;" flee for refuge unto the hope set before you." This year prison doors are opened, and a cry made to the prisoners to *come forth*, and to them that sit in darkness, *Show yourselves*. This year a charter for heaven and eternal life is put into every man's hand, with an express command from God to every man to take the benefit of it by faith: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life." This year the latter-will or testament of Christ is opened, that every man may, by virtue of the testament, claim the legacies of it. O, then, "Let us fear, lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should come short of it." Thus you see some of the great things that are done this year.

Fourthly, Another notable year of the redeemed, is the year of applied redemption; under which may be comprised and comprehended the whole period of time from the soul's conversion to the day of death. This year, what was purposed by the Father, purchased by the Son, and exhibited in the gospel, is applied and made effectual. If it be asked, What great things are done for the redeemed this year? I answer,

1. Commonly in the beginning of this year, some thunder-claps are heard from mount Sinai, by which the poor soul that was lying fast asleep within the sea mark of God's wrath, is awakened to perceive his danger. The poor vessel of mercy was under the power of sin and Satan, promising himself "peace though he walked after the imagination of his own heart," hiding himself from wrath in the refuge of general mercy, in the refuge of a profession of law righteousness, or the like; but a storm of hail, I mean of terrors of the law, comes and "sweeps away the refuge of lies," it blows away his fig-leaf covering; and thereupon the man, who before thought himself sure of salvation, begins to cry out with the jailer, "Men and brethren, what shall I do to be saved?" The man finds himself to be dead in law, "condemned already," yea, to be not only legally, but spiritually dead, under the power of sin and Satan, and his bonds to be so strong, that neither he nor the whole creation is able to loose them; and this fills him with such anxiety and trouble of spirit, that he is even at his wits' end, that he does not know what to do. O! whither shall I flee for help, where shall I leave my glory? O that I knew of a refuge in heaven or earth, to which I might run for shelter!

2. In the beginning of this year the dead soul is raised up to a new spiritual life: "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." The great Redeemer, who "hath life in himself," and "received it for men, yea, for the rebellious," comes to the sinner's grave of sin, in which he was buried, and cries to him, as he did to Lazarus, "O sinner, come forth;" and immediately the bars of spiritual death are broken, the bonds of death are loosed, and "the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus," enters into him, whereby he is made free from the law of sin and death."

3. In the entry of this year, the Redeemer recovers sight to the blind. The poor creature was so blinded by Satan, the god of this world, that though the light of the Sun of righteousness, had been shining upon him, and about him in a gospel-dispensation, yet he did not behold it, the enemy had done with him as the Philistines did with Samson, put out his eyes; but now the glorious Redeemer, with his eye-salve touches the eyes of the understanding, by which the blind eyes are opened; "God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, shines into his heart, and gives him the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ," he is "translated out of darkness into a marvellous" and surprising "light." And now he begins to see things in another view; and the first sight that he gets of Christ, he is even surprised and overjoyed at the sight, crying, O! "this is my

my rest for ever; here will I dwell, for I have desired it." I have been seeking rest, but could not find it, but now I have found it; "To him shall the Gentiles seek, and his rest shall be glorious." Once I could "see no form nor comeliness in him, why he should be desired:" but now I see him to be "white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand."

4. In the beginning of this year, the man is entered into the kingdom of heaven, even upon earth; he enters into the new heaven and the new earth, the kingdom of God is reared up in the soul, and sin and self are dethroned. The glorious Redeemer, who is "the Lord of hosts," by the power of his eternal Spirit, he makes his entry at the everlasting gates of the soul, saying, This soul is mine; it was given me by my Father, I redeemed it with the price of my blood; and therefore sin, and Satan, and self, resign your government, and render up this soul and all its powers and faculties unto me; and he binds the strong man, spoils him of his goods; the batteries of the gospel, and ordinances of it, are so well managed in the hand of the Spirit, that the strong-holds of Satan, and the high and towering imaginations of the soul, fall down at the feet of the glorious Redeemer, and every thought of the heart becomes a captive to the obedience of the great Captain of salvation, and the soul becomes a volunteer in the service of Christ.

5. In the beginning of this year, the prodigal straying son is brought home again; that wonderful question is answered, "How shall I put thee among the children," who had wandered away into a far country? and the Father and all the family rejoice and make merry at his return; and no sooner does he enter his Father's threshold, but his filthy rags are cast away, and he is clothed with the best robe of the Son of God, by which he is made to look like his Father's son. Which leads me also to tell you, that this year the righteousness of the law is so fulfilled in the guilty sinner, who was standing condemned at the bar of God and conscience, that now there is no condemnation for him; yea, he can lift up his head with courage, and say, "Who is he that condemneth? It is God that justifieth; it is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again," &c.

6. Again, this year King Solomon is both crowned and married; a match is made up and concluded between the Prince of life and an heir of hell. In the former year the purpose of marriage was proclaimed, saying, "I will betroth thee unto me, in righteousness, mercy, faithfulness, and loving-kindness, yea, I will betroth thee unto me for ever;" and this year the bride gives her consent to the bargain, saying, "I

am the Lord's:" and that day in which the bride gives her consent, the Bridegroom reckons it his coronation day: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Zion, and behold King Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart."

7. This year the poor soul finds the pearl of great price in the field of the word, by which it is made up and enriched for ever. It discovers a mine of unsearchable riches of grace, riches of wisdom, riches of righteousness, riches of glory, and claims all as its own upon the grant made of it in the word, or in the record of God, in which he gives us that eternal life, which is in his Son. This year the soul "sets to its seal that God is true," acquiescing in it as a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." This year the soul "enters into the holiest by the blood of Jesus; enters upon a state of fellowship and communion with God, in his light, in his life, in his love, and is put in a capacity to say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ." This year the vessel of mercy is "plucked as a brand out of the fire," and hung upon "the nail fastened in a sure place," from whence all the powers of hell shall not be able to pull it down again; for "neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." This year the foundation of a new and spiritual temple is laid for God to dwell in: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" This year the branch of the old Adam is cut off, and ingrafted into the true vine, "the plant of renown," and those who were limbs of Satan, are made "members of Christ," and to hold that new "head, from which the whole body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." Thus you see what great things are done in the very beginning of this year of applied redemption.

I might here also tell you, that in the progress of this year, the Redeemer does many great things for the redeemed. The great work of the remaining part of this year, is to advance and carry on the good work of sanctification or holiness in their souls, by which they are more and more ripened for the year of everlasting life and glory. For which end he [tries] them with a variety of dispensations, both as to the outward and inward man; sometimes with health, sometimes with sickness; sometimes with prosperity, sometimes with adversity; sometimes he smiles, sometimes he smites; sometimes the candle of the Lord shines on their heads, and they

behold the glory of the Lord; sometimes they go mourning without the sun, crying, "O that I knew where I might find him!" sometimes he pinches them with hunger and thirst, at other times he "anoints their heads with oil, and makes their cup to run over;" sometimes they ride upon the high places of Jacob, at other times they drive heavily like the chariots of Pharaoh; sometimes they are "plunged into the ditch" of sin, so that their "own clothes do abhor them;" at other times he takes them up from "among the pots, and makes them to shine like the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold:" and this way the remaining part of the year is spent: by all which variety of dispensations, he is still advancing the soul in grace and holiness, till it be ripe for glory; according to his promise; "All things shall work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." And so much for the fourth year, of applied redemption. I come now to

The *fifth* and *last* year, and that is the year of consummated and perfected redemption. This is an everlasting year, which never, never ends. All the former years are already come, with respect to every believer; but this year is not yet come, but is fast coming, *Behold, I come quickly*, says the Lord: and therefore I may say, Lift up thy head, believer, for the year or "day of thy redemption draweth nigh." Now, this year of perfected redemption has a twofold period, the one at death, and the other at the resurrection, or the day of Christ's second coming.

If it be asked, *first*, What is done for the ransomed of the Lord at death?

Answ. 1. In the beginning of this year Jordan is divided, the waters thereof file off on every hand, that the redeemed of the Lord may have a safe passage to the promised land of glory. Poor believer, thou hast many a weary thought about thy passage, lest the waters of the Jordan of death swallow thee up; but do not fear, that moment thou settest thy foot within the brink of this river, thou wilt see the ark of God before thee, and multitudes of thy fellow-travellers on the other side, and nothing but dry ground between thee and them, where there is no manner of danger.

2. In the very beginning of this year Christ comes, according to his promise, John xiv. 2, 3, to receive his ransomed ones to glory, that "where he is, there they may be also." And when he comes, he comes with "the keys of hell and death" in his hand, saying, "Fear not, for I was dead, and I am alive, and I live for evermore;" I am the Lord and Master of death; I open the grave, and shut it at my pleasure; "I have ran-

somed thee from the power of the grave, I have redeemed thee from death;" I have plagued death, I have destroyed the grave; and therefore do not fear.

3. In the very beginning of this year the believer flits from his house of clay, into a "house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." Perhaps, believer, thou payest a dear house-meal for thy lodging in this tabernacle of clay; "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened; but, believer, thou shalt have a better lodging ere it be long, where all the rent thou wilt pay for thy quarters will be to sing hallelujahs of praise to the glorious Redeemer, and to join in that heavenly choir, "Salvation to him that sitteth on the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever."

4. In the very beginning of this year, the believer goes to his bed to rest him till he awakes in the morning of the resurrection. The poor man has toiled himself all the day, and perhaps his day has been sixty, seventy, or a hundred years long; but at length he "falls asleep in Jesus:" may be, like Job, wearisome days and nights were appointed to him, he could not get rest upon his other beds, his couch could not ease, or comfort him; but this year he enters into peace, he rests in his bed, sleeps on a soft pillow, "sleeps in Jesus," lays his head down upon the warm bosom of Jesus, where he sleeps sound without disturbance from hell or earth, till that voice come from heaven, "Awake, and sing, ye that sleep in the dust."

5. In the very beginning of this year, the believer is gathered to his own people, even unto the general assembly and church of the first-born. It is said of Jacob, when he died, "he drew up his feet in his bed, and was gathered unto his people:" A strange expression! Jacob, when he died, was in the midst of his children and family, and a goodly family he had about him, children and grandchildren; he was dying in honour, and in favour and respect with the king of Egypt; one would think that he was but departing from his people; but it is called a "gathering unto his people," because death brought him to far better company, even "to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to the general assembly of the first-born." All the company above are the first-born, because every one is an heir, not one of them misses the inheritance. In so many words, not to insist upon particulars; in the beginning of this year the believer drops the body of sin, which made him to go with a bowed-down back, and is made perfect in holiness, presented "without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." This year the believer drops mortality, and enters upon immortality, comes to the possession of that life everlasting, which shall run parallel with the life of God.

This year the believer leaves the wilderness of this world behind him, bids it adieu for ever, and comes to his own country, the inheritance of the saints in light;" he was a stranger and a pilgrim, but now he comes to his own home. This year his warfare with sin, Satan, and the world is ended, and he comes off the field like a victorious conqueror, with the palm of victory in his hand, singing that song, "Thanks be to God, that giveth me the victory, through Jesus Christ our Lord." In the beginning of this year he ends his race, and comes at the "mark and prize of the high calling of God;" he comes even to "the end of his faith" and hope, "the salvation of his soul," in the full and immediate enjoyment of God for evermore. This year distance and darkness end, and everlasting light begins, no more clouds of desertion to overcast his sky through eternity; now "the Lord shall be his everlasting light, and his God his glory;" the Lord God and the Lamb are the light of that place." This year the believer quits the by-table of ordinances, word, and sacraments in the church militant, and sits down at the high table with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; yea, he drinks of the fruit of the vine new with Christ in the kingdom of heaven. In a word, this year all the believer's sobs, and tears, and sorrows end, and he begins his songs and triumphs: "The ransomed of the Lord shall come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

But then, *secondly*, for the other period of this year, namely, the resurrection, great things are done by the Redeemer for his ransomed and redeemed ones: take these few among many others:—

1. This year the Redeemer translates the seat of his empire from the highest heavens to these clouds that are above our heads: "Behold he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him." O with what royal splendour and magnificence will he appear when he descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God, when his white throne will be surrounded with ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands! This year the visible frame of nature is to be unhinged, and this earth, which has been the theatre of so much sin, is to be burnt: "The day of the Lord cometh, wherein the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up," 2 Pet. iii. 10, and ver. 12: "Looking for, and hasting unto the coming of the day of God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be dissolved, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat." With what awful

solemnity will the second coming of the great Redeemer be attended! This year God is to send out his reapers to reap the field of this world, I mean, the holy angels: and they will reap so clean, that they will not leave one soul that ever sprung of Adam behind them; no, no, they will be all gathered together to the tribunal.

2. This year death and the grave are to render the prey which they have devoured; "the sea will give up its dead, and the earth will give up its dead." Thy head, believer, this year is to be lifted up out of the prison of the grave; God will open his cabinet, and bring forth his jewels in the view of men and angels, every one of them "shining like the sun in the kingdom of their Father;" insomuch that Christ will be admired in his very saints and members: when they are purged from the dross of sin and mortality, they will "shine like the brightness of the firmament," and "like the stars for ever and ever;" "our vile bodies shall be made like unto Christ's glorious body." This year "this mortal will put on immortality, and death shall be swallowed up in victory." This year Christ's scattered jewels and members will all be gathered together to him; he will call to the earth from the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, saying, "Gather my saints together unto me, those that have made a covenant with me by sacrifice." And O what a bright constellation will they make, when they shall be all seen standing at the right hand of Christ in white raiment, with the triple crown of glory, joy, and righteousness, upon their heads, being "an innumerable company which no man can number!"

3. This year the upright are to have dominion over the wicked. The tables will be turned, and the scene of this world will be quite altered, and turned upside down; the wicked proud, who refused or disdained to set the poor believer with the dogs of their flocks, will be standing at the bar like a company of trembling panels waiting for their sentence, when the poor believer that was contemned by them will be sitting upon the bench with Christ as his assessor, applauding him in all his judicial proceedings. "Know ye not that the saints shall judge the world? yea, Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?" Then shall that scripture receive its full accomplishment, Psal. cxlix. 5—9.

4. This year Christ will confess his redeemed ones before his Father, and before his angels, who confessed and owned him before men, saying, "Lo, I and the children whom thou hast given me." And not only will he acknowledge, but he will acquit them of all the charges and accusations that were laid against them by the devil and the world, their sins shall

be "blotted out, when this time of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord."

5. This year the marriage of the Lamb is to be consummated with the most triumphant solemnity, so as the very arches of heaven will echo and resound, while the redeemed are crying one to another, "Let us be glad and rejoice, for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his bride hath made herself ready." Then shalt that word receive its full accomplishment, Psal. xlv. 14, 15: "She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needle-work: the virgins, her companions, that follow her shall be brought unto thee. With gladness and rejoicing shall they be brought: they shall enter into the King's palace," and take possession of these thrones that were "prepared for them before the foundation of the world," and so they shall spend this endless year in following the Lamb, and singing, "Salvation to our God that sits upon the throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever." Thus I have given you an account of the long year of the redeemed, which is from everlasting to everlasting in its several periods, and some hints of the transactions of each period; but the ten thousandth part cannot be told of what has been done, and is yet to be done in them, for the redeemed of the Lord. I proceed now to,

IV. The *fourth* thing upon this first branch of the doctrine, namely, to *prove that the year of the redeemed, is the joy of the Redeemer's heart.* I shall not stay upon this, it being so clear in the text, you see with what a great deal of pleasure and satisfaction he speaks of it, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.* The year of purposed redemption was his joy, so he declares, Prov. viii., when "he was set up from everlasting, he rejoiced in the habitable parts of the earth, and his delights were with the sons of men." Again, the year of purchased redemption was his joy: as he longed to come into the world, in order to redeem sinners, so when he was actually come, he longed for the day when he should finish it by his death upon the cross: "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!" Again, the day of exhibited and revealed redemption is his joy. With what pleasure does he send out his heralds to proclaim his salvation to the ends of the earth! It was among the last charges that he gave his apostles before he ascended, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel unto every creature." The day of applied redemption in conversion and effectual calling is his joy, therefore called the "day of the gladness of his heart." The heart of the Father of the prodigal was glad when his son came home;

there is joy in heaven at the conversion of a sinner. And then the day of consummated redemption, with what joy doth he receive the soul upon the back of death into these mansions of glory that he has prepared for it in heaven! "I will come and receive you to myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." Christ stands ready, as it were, to keep the soul of the believer in his hand and arms whenever it is dislodged from the body. And then the day of consummated redemption both in soul and body at the resurrection is his joy, for he will descend from heaven with a shout of joy and triumph, and he will call all the members of his body to rejoice with him: Is. xxvi. 19: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that sleep in the dust; for thy dew shall be as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out her dead." Thus you see that the year of the redeemed, and every period thereof, is the joy of the Redeemer.

I should now proceed to the second branch of the doctrine, but I shall at present only close what has been said with a word of use in these few following inferences:—

1. See hence that *God is love*, as he is described by the apostle, 1 John iv. 16. O sirs, the great design of the gospel, and of the whole revelation of God, and of his will therein, is to afford you such views of the love of God, as may kill your enmity against him. Now, will you but take a view of this wonderful train that Infinite Wisdom has laid for your happiness through all these five periods that I have named, and see if this be not a just description, that he is love itself. What but infinite love purposed our redemption, when we were "in our blood?" What but love could purchase it with the price of the blood of God? What but love could bring forth the Redeemer and his whole purchase, and make a free gift and offer of him to us in the gospel? What but infinite love could give the Spirit to apply it, by uniting us to Christ who were joined to our idols? What but infinite love would be at pains to carry on the good work till it be perfected in the day of Christ? May not the views of all these together make us stand still, like men at their wits' end, and cry, "O the height, the depth, the breadth, and length of the love of God, which passeth knowledge!"

2. See hence, that "truly God is good unto Israel." Is he not good to them, when the year of their redemption, both purchased and perfected, is the very joy of his heart: Well may we set to our seal that record that God gives of himself, Psal. cxix. 68: "Thou art good, and dost good." His goodness is so great, that it cannot be conceived or expressed; hence is that of David, Psal. xxxi. 19: "How great is thy

goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee: which thou hast wrought for them that trust in thee, before the sons of men! Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him."

3. See hence what monsters of ingratitude they are, who reproach and blaspheme our glorious Redeemer, and derogate from his divine glory and excellency, as if he were not the supreme, self-existent, independent God, but only an inferior dependent being. None that ever knew him in a saving manner, or that have had his redemption applied by the Spirit to their souls, could speak so lightly of him. We may leave it to the devils or fallen angels to blaspheme him, on whom his day of vengeance falls; but for any of Adam's family, or yet more, for any in the church of God, and that profess to be among the redeemed, is such ingratitude as words are wanting to express. If the Son of God had taken upon him the nature of angels, and passed by the seed of Abraham; if he had been their Redeemer, as he is their avenger, would ever any of them have spoken a dishonouring word of him, or disparaged his glory? No, no, their blasphemies would have been turned into hallelujahs. What a shame and unaccountable thing is it then, that any of the posterity of Adam, or much more masters in Israel, whose province it is to commend and honour him, that they should rise up and "blaspheme that worthy name by which we are called," as if he were an inferior kind of deity, and not the supreme God!

The *second* use of the doctrine may be of *Trial.* O, sirs, what year is it with you yet? You are all under the year of revealed and published redemption, but that will not prove you to be among the redeemed of the Lord. The great question is, Whether the year of applied redemption be come to you, yea or not? You heard what things are commonly done in the year of applied redemption; try whether they be done upon your souls in particular. Has "the hail-storm" from mount Sinai "swept away the refuge of lies?" Has the water so overflowed your hiding-place, that you was shut up to the faith? you found no place in heaven or in earth to hide you in, but in him who is "a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest, as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land?"—This year the dead are raised to life; and therefore I ask, Has "the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus" entered into thy soul? If so, then thou wilt not find thy life in thy hand, as the hypocrite, but thou wilt find thy life to be in thy Head, and be ready to say, "I am dead, and my life is hid with Christ in God." Again, this year the blind eyes are opened;

and therefore I ask, Hast thou received thy sight? Can you say, with the poor man, "How he opened mine eyes I know not; but this I know, once I was blind, but now I see?" I see such form and comeliness in Christ, that he is in my eye "more glorious and excellent than all the mountains of prey." Again, this year the kingdom of God is reared up in the soul; and therefore I ask, Who bears the principal sway within? Who sits on the throne of thy heart? Christ, or any of his rivals? If Christ have the throne, you will treat self, sin, the world, and every thing that would rival him, as usurpers, and enemies; saying with David, "Do not I hate them that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee?" Again, you heard, that this year the prodigal son is brought home to his Father's house from the far country where he was starving; and therefore I ask, Have you yet broken your Father's bread? Have you in and by the word "tasted that the Lord is gracious?" Have you been made to say, "Thy word was found by me, and I did eat it, and it was to me the joy and rejoicing of my heart?" If so, then the year of thy redemption is come. Again, this year the guilty condemned criminal is vested with a law-abiding righteousness; and therefore I ask, Have you laid aside your filthy rags, and put on your elder brother's robe? I mean, have you renounced your own righteousness as dung and loss, and submitted to the righteousness of God, saying, "In the Lord have I righteousness and strength, in him will I be justified, and will glory?"—Again, this year King Solomon is crowned and married; and therefore I ask, Hast thou by faith gone forth from sin, self, and the world, and beheld him with the crown upon his head? Did his matchless glory captivate thy heart, so that thou wast made to say, "I am the Lord's, and I will henceforth be called by his name?" Art thou resolved that from this time forth, through grace, thou wilt keep the bed of thy heart and soul for him, and that he shall lie as a bundle of myrrh between thy breasts?—Again, this year the poor bankrupt sinner finds "the pearl of great price;" and therefore I ask, If you have acted as the wise merchant, selling all, that you may cleave to him as your only riches, saying with Paul, "Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord?" Do you esteem him, and the riches of grace that are in him? for "to you that believe he is precious."—Again, this year the soul seals the record of God; and therefore I ask, How do you hold your claim to eternal life? Is God's grant of it, through Christ in the covenant of grace and promise, your only charter? Can you rejoice in the hope of the glory of God, grounded on the bare word of

God, as one that findeth great spoils, saying, "This is all my salvation? God hath spoken in his holiness; I will rejoice?"—Again, this year the soul enters into the holiest, upon a state of fellowship and communion with God; and therefore I ask, With whom is your fellowship? Is it with the Father, and his Son Jesus Christ? If so, you will "have no fellowship with the the unfruitful works of darkness," you will be afraid of the least appearance of sin, or temptation to it, lest it separate between you and your God.—Again, this year the vessel of mercy that was like a brand in the fire, is plucked out, and hung upon the "nail fastened in a sure place;" and therefore I ask, Where and on whom hangs the main stress of thy salvation from sin, Satan, hell, and wrath? Dost thou lay the weight where God has laid it, even upon the foundation God has laid in Zion?—Again, this year the foundation of a new temple is laid for God to dwell in; and therefore I ask, Art thou concerned to keep the temple pure from every thing that has a tendency to defile it? "The temple of God is holy; and if any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy." You will study to be holy in soul, body, and in all manner of conversation. Now, I say, try by these, or the like questions, whether or not the year of applied redemption be come.

And if so, then I have a word of *Exhortation* to offer you. Is the year of thy redemption come? Then,

1. Be exhorted to remember the year of thy redemption, both the year in which it was purchased, and the year in which it was applied by the power of the eternal Spirit. The children of Israel are frequently commanded to remember the year and day in which God brought them forth "out of the land of Egypt," Deut. xvi. 1: "Observe the month of Abib, and keep the passover unto the Lord thy God: for in the month of Abib the Lord thy God brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt." Were they obliged to remember their typical and temporal redemption? and shall not we much more remember the time of our spiritual and real redemption? It is, indeed, a time that is to be remembered through all generations of God's Israel.

2. Now, upon a thanksgiving day, celebrate the praises of your great Redeemer, who had the year of your redemption so much at his heart: Jer. xxxi. 11—13: "The Lord redeemed Jacob, and ransomed him from the hands of those that were stronger than he: therefore come and let us sing in the heights of Zion." I remember it is said, Is. xxiv. 16: "From the uttermost parts of the earth have we heard songs, even glory to the righteous;" that is, to Christ Jesus the righteous. It is, as I conceive, a promise of an echo that

that should be heard among the Gentile nations upon the publication of the year of redemption among them; echo of praise should be heard rebounding to heaven upon the utterance of this joyful sound, which you have been hearing this day, and the days past. O, therefore, let songs be heard among you from this wing of the earth, glory, glory, glory to Christ Jesus the righteous. Glory to him, who though he be the mighty God, yet was made of a woman, took on him my nature, that he might become my kinsman, and have the right of my redemption. Glory to him, who, though he be the great Lawgiver, was made under the law, that I might not sink under the curse and condemnation of it for ever. Glory to him, who laid the foundation of the house of mercy, which shall be built up for ever, and has brought me within the walls thereof, and given me a name and place there, even an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Glory to him that has rent the veil of the temple from top to bottom, so that I see now there is no impediment on God's part to hinder my access to God and glory. Glory to that righteous One, who is become the Lord my righteousness, having "magnified the law, and made it honourable," and "the Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake." Glory to him that has "finished transgression, and made an end of sin;" and it is so much ended, that it shall never have power to condemn me; he "condemned sin in the flesh: and therefore there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." Glory to the great Redeemer, that has confirmed the covenant, and made it sure with his own blood, so that "the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but his covenant of peace shall never depart." Glory to him, that entered the territories of death, the king of terrors, and came forth again like a renowned conqueror, carrying the keys of hell and death in his hand. Glory to him that has quenched the flames of wrath with his own blood, that would have consumed me for ever, and that through him God is a God of peace, and he is declared to be so by the resurrection of Christ Jesus from the dead; so that I can now take up that song, Is. xii. 1, 2: "Though thou wast angry with me, yet thine anger is turned away, and thou hast comforted me. The Lord is become my salvation," &c. Glory to the righteous One, who as he was delivered for my offences, so he is risen again for my justification, and I am discharged of my debt in him; he being justified, I am acquitted, and can say, "Who can lay any thing to my charge?" Glory to Christ Jesus the righteous, that because he lives, I shall live also; and "though worms shall destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God." Glory to him that is ascended to heaven

as my forerunner, and to be an advocate for me with his Father and my Father, with his God and my God, and I look for him to come the second time without sin to my everlasting salvation. Thus, I say, let these or the like songs be sent up as an echo of praise from the uttermost parts of the earth. And, to quicken you to this exercise, consider,

1*st*, It is commanded and required of you, as a debt due for his kindness to you: "Rejoice in the Lord, ye righteous; and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."

2*dly*, It is commended as a suitable and agreeable exercise: "Praise is comely for the upright:" Psal. xcii. 1, 2: "It is a good thing to give thanks unto the Lord, and to sing praises unto thy name, O Most High; to show forth thy loving-kindness in the morning, and thy faithfulness every night."

3*dly*, This is the very design of your formation, especially as one of the redeemed of the Lord: "This people have I formed for myself, that they may show forth my praise."

Athly, The more you sing his praises, the more occasion you shall have to sing: the thankful beggar is best served; and the thankful believer shall be made fat, and have his mouth more and more filled with the good of God's chosen.

5*thly*, This will be your occupation for ever in the land of praise that is above, to sing the praises of the great Redeemer, as you see, Rev. v. 9, 10. And therefore you should even be lisping out the song of praise in a strange land.

6*thly*, It is for the honour of your Redeemer, that you celebrate his praises: "Whoso offereth praise, glorifieth me," says the Lord, Psal. l. 23. This is all the revenue that he receives either from the church militant or triumphant, Psal. lxv. 1: "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion." And sure if you be among the number of the redeemed, you will not deny or withhold the Redeemer's tribute.

Quest. How shall we praise him?

Answ. 1. O praise him by believing in him and on him. Abraham, the father of the faithful, glorified him by believing, so should all the seed of Abraham; "He staggered not at the promise through unbelief; but was strong in the faith giving glory to God." It is for the honour of your Redeemer that you give credit to his word of promise, and that you trust and credit him with all your concerns, in time and through eternity.

2. Praise him by thinking much upon him: "While I was musing the fire burned; then spake I with my lips." When the heart indites a good matter concerning him, the tongue will be as the pen of a ready writer. O, says David, "My

meditation of him shall be sweet, and I will be glad in the Lord." And let your thoughts of him be high and raised thoughts, saying, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none in all the earth that I desire besides thee."

3. O praise your Redeemer, by commending him to others, and by studying to make his name to be remembered for ever. This was the practice of the spouse and bride of Christ, Psal. xlv. 17; and Cant. v. 10. You can do him no greater honour, than to make the savour of him known in all places, and in all companies where you have occasion to appear.

4. Praise him by a single regard to his preceptive, and a holy submission to his providential will. When he manifests his commanding will, be ready to run his errands, and do whatsoever he commands you; and when he brings you under affliction, lay yourselves at his feet, and say, "Here am I, let him do to me as he sees meet."

5. Praise him by a steadfast and resolute owning him and his truths, his ways, his ordinances, his worship, in this day of blasphemy against him, "contending earnestly for the faith delivered to the saints;" and in your sphere, testify against every thing that has a tendency to bring a reflection upon his glory.

6. Praise him by inviting others to join with you in celebrating his praise. O, will the soul say, I am under such a burden of obligations to him, that I would even invite the whole creation, angels and men, sun, moon, and stars to join issue with me, in helping me to lift up his great and glorious name: "O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together. This was frequently David's practice, Psal. ciii. 20—22; and Psal. cxlviii. throughout to the end.

I conclude at present with a word of exhortation to all in general. O sirs, what shall I tell you, the year of jubilee, the year of release and redemption is come; and I tell you that it is even come to you, to every soul hearing me, I proclaim "the acceptable year of the Lord," as well as the day of vengeance from our God against all that will not embrace it. We come in the name of the Lord of hosts to proclaim a purchased redemption to every one of you; that "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them." O let this joyful sound be received, let this acceptable year of the Lord be accepted of you by faith, and let your soul say, "O blessed be he that cometh in the name of the Lord to save us."

I told you in the doctrinal part what great and glorious things are done for sinners in the year of exhibited or revealed redemption; O improve the day, the year of your merciful visitation.

1. In this year light is arisen to you who were sitting under Pagan, Popish, and Prelatical darkness, even the light of a gospel-revelation. And therefore let me exhort and beseech you to beware of continuing under the power of darkness, beware of continuing ignorant and blind, as to the knowledge of that Redeemer, that life and immortality that is brought to light by the gospel; for ignorance of God, where the gospel-light shines, will be punished with a double vengeance; Christ will come, "in flaming fire, to take vengeance on all them that know not God, and obey not the gospel."

2. I was telling you, that this year of exhibited redemption the throne of grace is set up among the people, and proclamations of grace issued forth from it to the wretched, miserable, blind, and poor, and naked. And, therefore, O let me beseech you to come to this throne of grace, "that ye may obtain mercy, and find grace to help you in time of need." And let not a sense of sin and unworthiness keep you back; for a throne of grace is not made for the worthy, but for the unworthy, it is made for beggars, for bankrupts, for those that are undone, and the throne of grace has its standing by liberality.

3. This year God is planting his batteries against the high imaginations of the heart, and summons rebels to surrender their hearts to him. And therefore open the gates, saying, "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in."

4. This year Jacob's ladder is set up that reaches to heaven. And therefore let every man try if he can scale heaven by it, in order to recover that glory and happiness which we all lost, by the sin of the first Adam.

5. This year the fountain of the great deeps of the love of God in Christ are broken up, good-will toward man upon earth is proclaimed. And therefore let every man cast himself into the arms of a God of love and mercy: "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the sons of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings."

6. This year God reveals, and brings near his righteousness to you who are guilty criminals; in this year the righteousness is revealed, offered, presented to you. And therefore take the benefit of it, submit to it, put it on, that you may stand in judgment.

7. This year the fruits and leaves of the tree of life are scattered and shaken in our valley of vision. And therefore gather, apply, and eat, that you may be filled and healed; O taste of the bunches of the grapes of the true vine, and your souls shall live; O apply the healing leaves of his promises that you may partake of the good promised.

8. This year the pure river of water of life runs from under the throne of God, it runs even in our streets and broad ways. And therefore "whosoever will, let him come and take of the water of life freely:" Oh, poor dying sinner, taste but of this water, and it shall be in thee "a well of water springing up unto everlasting life."

9. This year the manna of heaven is rained down, God's banqueting-house is opened, he is making to you "a feast of fat things." And therefore, O starving sinner, come and take, and "eat and drink abundantly;" for "there is bread enough here, and to spare:" and as every man and woman in the camp had a right to gather the manna, so has every soul a right to take Christ, and to "eat his flesh, and drink his blood," by an applying faith to make use of him for "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

10. This year the city of refuge is standing open, that every sinner who has slain his soul by sin may flee in for shelter from avenging wrath. And therefore, O turn in to your strong-hold, for you are prisoners of hope: you have as good a right to flee to Christ for shelter, as ever the man-slayer had to run to the city of refuge: and, let me tell you, all refuge will fail you but this only; none of the other cities of Israel, nor yet the man's own home, could be a shelter to him; so here.

11. *Lastly*, This year Christ's testament and latter-will is opened, and opened to all the hearers of the gospel, and every man allowed and required to put in for his share of the legacies, yea, to claim the whole legacies of the testament. And therefore, O let us enter, "lest a promise being left us of entering into his rest, any of us should seem to come short of it;" O set your seal to the testament by believing, which Christ has sealed with the blood of his heart; and let not unbelief or Satan cheat you out of your souls, when you have such a good charter for your salvation, and the command of God to use it, and lay hold on it, John v. 39: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me."

THE ANNALS OF REDEEMING LOVE, WITH THE REDEEMER'S VENGEANCE UPON THE GRAND ENEMY OF THE REDEEMED.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—Is. LXIII. 4.

THE THIRD SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

THE doctrine I observed from the words was this, *That as the year of the redeemed is the joy of the Redeemer; so he has fixed the time for resenting and avenging their quarrel in his heart.* This doctrine consists of two branches. 1. That the year of the redeemed is the joy of the Redeemer. 2. That the glorious Redeemer has the time of avenging the quarrel of his redeemed fixed in his heart.

I have already discoursed upon the *first* branch of the doctrine; where I endeavoured to speak,

I. Of the Redeemer.

II. Of the redeemed.

III. Of the year of the redeemed.

IV. Proved that the year of the redeemed is the joy of the Redeemer.

V. Applied.

I proceed now to the *second* branch of the doctrine, namely, *That Christ, our glorious Redeemer, has the time of avenging the quarrel of his redeemed fixed in his heart: The day of vengeance is in mine heart.*

In discoursing on this, through divine assistance, I shall endeavour to observe the following method and order:—

I. Who is the grand enemy of the redeemed, whom Christ our Redeemer has in his eye here?

II. Inquire into the ground of the quarrel.

III. Speak a little of the vengeance of the Redeemer that lights on the enemy of the redeemed.

IV. Inquire into the stated time of vengeance, here called a *day*.

V. Why this is said to be in his heart: *The day of vengeance is in mine heart.*

VI. Apply the whole.

I. The *first* thing is, to *inquire who is the grand enemy that the glorious Redeemer has in his view*, when he says, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart.* I answer, The grand enemy at whom he levels his vengeance, is Satan, the great deceiver of mankind. If we observe the current of the scriptures, in giving an account of our Redeemer's conduct in bringing about the glorious work of man's redemption, his great contest and conflict has been with this enemy from first to last. Look we to the first promise, Gen. iii. 15, it was wrapt up in a threatening against Satan in the form of a serpent, "It," namely, the seed of the woman Christ "shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel." As if he had said, O Satan, I will be avenged on thee for the injury thou hast done to the woman and her seed. I resent their quarrel, and, by one born of a woman, I will bruise thy head, destroy thee and all thy works. When Christ actually appeared upon the stage of time, he actually entered the lists with this enemy: Matth. iv.: "He was led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil," and there first began to put to flight this leader and commander of "the armies of the aliens." The great scope of his doctrine was, to overthrow Satan's kingdom; and he tells us, that he "saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven" before the preaching of his disciples. Many of his miracles were just the throwing Satan out of the bodies of men, of which he had a visible possession. His death was a fatal stroke at the head of the serpent. "Now," says he, "is the judgment of this world come; now is the prince of this world judged." Agreeably to this is that which you have, Col. ii. 15: "Having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a show of them openly, having triumphed over them in it." Heb. ii. 14: "through death he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." 1 John iii. 8: "Whosoever committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil." And Rev. xii., we shall find, that the war is principally managed between Michael and his angels, and the devil and his angels. Thus you see who is the principal enemy that Christ has in his view, when he says in my text, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart.* But now, though Satan be the leading enemy, yet other enemies come in also of course; for vengeance is designed against all the works of the devil, and against all his confederates, as well as against Satan himself, as you may hear afterward.

II. The *second* thing is, to *inquire into the ground of the quarrel that our Redeemer has against this enemy.* I shall not stand to inquire what was the first sin of the devil, for which he

was tumbled down from heaven to hell; though it is pretty clearly suggested to us, that "being lifted up with pride, he fell into condemnation." But the special quarrel that our Redeemer here has in his eye, is the injury done to his redeemed; and therefore the day of vengeance and the year of the redeemed are coupled together.

Quest. What injury had Satan done to the redeemed?

Answ. 1. Satan had deceived them. He put a cheat upon our first parents, telling them that the tree was good, and that by eating of it they should become as gods, knowing good and evil, whereas the very reverse was the truth: and this has been, and is his continued work to deceive, therefore called the great deceiver of mankind. Now, this is one quarrel for which the day of vengeance is in his heart against him.

2. By deceiving them into sin, he defaced the image of God which he had stamped upon man. When man first dropped out of the fingers of his Maker, he bore the lively print of his Creator's fingers, yea, his very image, consisting in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; but no sooner had Satan deceived us into a transgression of the divine commandment, but immediately his gold became dim: instead of being like God, as the deceiver told them, they became like devils, the hue of hell immediately appeared on them, instead of the beauty of heaven; their minds being filled with darkness, instead of knowledge; their hearts being filled with enmity against God, instead of being filled with love to him; their affections flagging, and settling upon the earth, and licking up the dust like the serpent, instead of towering upward toward things that were above.

3. He had made them liable unto the curse of the law, and the wrath of God with himself. God had said, "In the day thou eatest, thou shalt surely die; and the law said, "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them." Now, Satan had brought them under this; for even the elect of God, as well as others, because of the breach of the law, are the children of wrath and condemnation. This is another quarrel which the Redeemer resents upon the enemy.

4. Satan had not only brought them under the curse of God, but he had made them his own slaves, led them away as his captives to work his work, yea, had armed God's favourites, and brought them out in open rebellion against God; for "the carnal mind is enmity against God," and we are "enemies in our minds by wicked works." He had filled their hearts and hands with weapons of rebellion against Heaven, such as unbelief, enmity, pride, ignorance, vanity, carnality; and their

very bodily members were become instruments of sin and unrighteousness. Thus you see what injury Satan had done to the redeemed: and all this he had done out of plain malice against God himself, to rub an affront upon the Majesty of heaven, who had with his omnipotent arm cast these mighty spirits out of their seats in heaven; and because he could not shake the throne of God, therefore he wrecks his vengeance upon God's viceroy in this lower world, whom he had crowned with glory and dignity, and put all things under his feet. Now, because of all this, Christ the Son of God resolves to be about with this enemy, saying, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart.*

III. The *third* thing was, to *inquire what vengeance is it that our Redeemer takes upon this enemy of the redeemed.* I find this vengeance on Satan variously expressed in scripture. In the forecited Gen. iii. 15, it is called a *bruising of his head,* which implies a deadly and destructive wound that he should never again recover. Sometimes it is called a *judging of the devil,* John xvi. 11: "The prince of this world is judged." Christ brought him like a condemned panel to his bar, and passes sentence upon him for the injury done to his redeemed. Sometimes it is called a *destroying of the devil,* Heb. ii. 14: "He destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." So, 1 John iii. 8. The great destroyer of mankind is destroyed himself by "the Lion of the tribe of Judah," the avenger of our blood. Sometimes again it is called a *spoiling of principalities and powers,* Col. ii. 15. That enemy had made a prey of the redeemed; but Christ comes as the Captain of salvation, and spoils him of his prey, "divides a portion with the great, and shares the spoil with the strong." Thus you see how this vengeance of the Redeemer is expressed. But to clear this matter a little more fully, I will tell you of several pieces of vengeance that our Redeemer executes upon Satan in the resentment of our quarrel, or in avenging our blood.

1. Our glorious Redeemer, in resenting of our quarrel, invades Satan's usurped kingdom and government, which he had established in this world. Satan is called *the god of this world;* and he had it so much under his power, that there is not one of Adam's family but is wholly devoted to his service and obedience; by nature "they are altogether become filthy; there is none of them that doeth good, no not one." Now when Satan is, as it were, in the peaceable possession of his kingdom, our glorious leader and commander, Jesus Christ, takes an expedition from heaven against him. Had there been a party of Adam's race disaffected to the devil's

empire, and ready to join him when he entered the devil's territories, one would think it might have been some encouragement, but no such thing in the present case; they were wholly devoted to his service and obedience, and therefore, in the verse immediately following my text, he says, "I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me, and my fury it upheld me." But, notwithstanding of this discouragement, he invades Satan's kingdom, and does it alone; and at the very first inroad which he made upon him, which was in a word of promise, he wrests the poor woman, whom he had deceived, out of his paw and power; for it is very remarkable, that the words of the first promise, in the original, run thus: "I will put enmity between thee and this woman;" plainly intimating, that she was the first believer, the first that threw off the devil's yoke, and joined herself to the Son of God, by virtue of that promise. And the whole scriptures are but a large commentary upon that promise, and a farther opening of it; he has ever since, and is at this day, by the same engine of the gospel, battering down his kingdom in the world, and will carry it on by the same means, till he has quite driven him out of his possession.

2. Our glorious Redeemer outshoots the devil with his own bow, or, to use a scripture phrase, "he takes this wise spirit in his own craftiness, and turns the counsel of the froward spirit headlong." No doubt Satan, that old serpent, when he had brought our first parents to break the covenant of works, thought with himself, that now he was secure of his prey, and that it was impossible God could save men, in consistency with the honour of his law, justice, and faithfulness. The law was broken, and therefore justice was obliged to destroy him; and the faithfulness of God was engaged to execute the threatening, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." No doubt, Satan thought his kingdom safe and sure, when the very justice, law, and faithfulness of God, yea, his holy sovereignty, and other perfections of God, obliged him to leave poor fallen man under his power. But our glorious Redeemer, finds a way to recover the honour of his law, justice, faithfulness, holiness, and sovereignty, in the salvation of lost man. He so orders it, that the law, instead of being a loser, is "magnified and made honourable;" justice, instead of sustaining prejudice, receives a full and complete, yea, infinite satisfaction; the faithfulness of God in his threatening, is secured by the execution of it upon himself, as our surety, and divine faithfulness pledged for the salvation of the woman and her believing seed; the sovereignty of God is more displayed than ever, while he makes grace to

reign through righteousness to eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus the main batteries which Satan had reared, and under which he lay intrenched, are overthrown, and turned to his ruin, and the ruin of his kingdom.

3. Our glorious Redeemer, and avenger of our blood, in resenting our quarrel, condemns sin, the first-born of the devil. What greater vengeance can you execute upon a man than to slay his first-born before his face? This our glorious Redeemer does to Satan; he "condemned sin in the flesh;" yea, "he finished it, and made an end of it." By sin the devil had done the greatest mischief in the world; by sin he had robbed God of his glory, and cast dirt upon all his perfections; by sin he had disturbed God's government in the world; by sin he had defaced the image of God in man, and ruined his principal workmanship. Now, says Christ to Satan, I will condemn and destroy thy first-born before thine eyes. And, accordingly, he abolishes the guilt of it, that it cannot condemn; he destroys the power of it, that it may not reign; he washes off the filth of it, that it may not separate or break up communion; and, at last, takes away the very being of it in all the redeemed. And O what a vengeance is it upon Satan to see his first-born thus ruined and destroyed before his eyes.

4. Our glorious Redeemer, in avenging our quarrel, wrests the keys of death and hell out of the devil's hand. Immediately upon the entry of sin, justice, in pursuing the criminal, delivers the keys of death into the hand of the devil, as a jailer and executioner; and, no doubt, he thought himself very sure of his dominion over man, when the keys of hell and death were in his own hand; but Christ having abolished sin, and satisfied justice for the sin of man, all power in heaven, earth, and hell, naturally falls into his hand: but Satan being loath to resign the power of death, Christ through death destroys him, and spoils him of his power, even upon the cross, where he seems most to triumph; and Christ holds up the keys in his hand, in the view of the redeemed, crying, "Fear not; I was dead, and am alive, and I live for evermore; and have the keys of hell and death:" and it is easy to think, how galling this is to that proud spirit, to see the keys of death in the hand of our blessed Kinsman.

5. This is not all, but our glorious Redeemer, in avenging our quarrel, lays a heavy chain upon the roaring enemy, that he has not power to go one hair-breadth, but as his chain is lengthened or shortened by the controlling and invincible hand of our Redeemer. We are told, Jude 6, that he has them, namely, the fallen angels, reserved in everlasting chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." The

devil is under a threefold chain: a chain of sin, under the bonds of iniquity; and the bond of his own sin, which he has put on, he never can or will put off: a chain of guilt in his conscience, which he can no more shake off, than he can cease to be; and under this chain he shakes and trembles, carrying hell about with him wherever he goes: and then there is the chain of infinite power exerted by the Son, as our Redeemer, the man of God's right hand; he binds the strong man, and spoils him of his goods. We are told in the book of the Revelation, that Christ takes him and binds him a thousand years, lays him under a restraint, that he cannot do the mischief he would be at. He could not harm Job till he was allowed; he could not enter into the Gadarene swine without his allowance. And with what ease did Christ, even when in a state of humiliation, by a word speaking, cast him out of the souls and bodies of men!

6. Christ, in executing vengeance upon Satan, not only by the power of his word brings his strong-holds in the heart to ruin; but he takes those who were his slaves and vassals from under his power, and arms them with his truth, as a shield and buckler, by which they make war against him under Christ's conduct, as their leader and commander. And what a galling vengeance is it to that proud spirit, to have those who were his bond-slaves fighting against him, resisting him, quenching his fiery darts, and putting him to the flight! "Resist the devil," says Christ, "and he will flee from you."

7. Christ, in avenging our quarrel, not only conquers him, and binds him, and wrests the prey out of his hand; but he makes a spectacle of him, and of all his legions. Colos. ii. 15: it is said, that "he made a show of principalities and powers." Some think that in the expression there is an allusion to the Roman conquerors, who, in their triumph, led their enemies along in chains, as trophies of their victory; so Christ, in his very cross, made a show or spectacle of principalities and powers to the whole world of spirits, the good angels looking on Satan as foiled by their great Lord in the nature of man. O what a vengeance was this to Satan! how galling to the proud Lucifer!

8. Christ, the avenger of our quarrel, makes as it were a lane and road between heaven and earth, by his own ascension, through the very territories of the devil, who is called "the prince of the power of the air." When Christ ascended in our nature, he went through the air, where the devil has his principal power, and twenty thousand chariots of angels attending him; and through that same road all the redeemed follow him at death, under a guard of angels. And how galling is it to that proud spirit, to see poor believers passing safe-

ly through his territories, to take possession of these thrones, that were vacated by his fall, and the fall of these legions which he drew with him!

9. Our glorious Redeemer, in farther resentment of our quarrel upon Satan, will at the last day make the poor believer, who was once under his power, and whom he many times harassed with his fiery darts, to judge and condemn him: "Know ye not that the saints shall judge angels?" How galling will it be to that proud spirit to stand at the bar, and see the believer upon the bench, especially when the God of peace shall call them to come and tread him under their feet, for the many injuries that he did to God and them! then "shall the righteous rejoice when he seeth the vengeance." And then, to conclude this head, Christ in a way of vengeance, will shut up the devil and all his adherents, in that everlasting fire, that he hath prepared for them. "Tophet is ordained of old: for him (the king of the bottomless pit) it is prepared: the pile whereof is fire and much wood, and the breath of the Lord, like a stream of brimstone, doth kindle it."

10. He burns his galleries, where he has walked up and down: "The earth and the works thereof shall be burnt up," &c. And this much for the *third* thing.

IV. The *fourth* thing was, to *speak a little of the day of vengeance, or of the stated time of the Redeemer's avenging the quarrel of the redeemed.* But this question is much prevented by what has been already said: only for clearing this, know that there is a time of Christ's being avenged upon him in his own person, and a time of his taking vengeance upon him in his members.

First, I say, there are some seasons of his taking vengeance upon him in his own person. As,

1. Upon the back of his first sin, when that proud spirit, swelled with ambition, attempted the throne of heaven, the Son of God, armed with his Father's power, turned him and his apostate legions down from heaven to hell: 2 Pet. ii. 4: "He spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell."

2. The day of Christ's incarnation and manifestation in the flesh. Ever since the fall of Adam to the birth of Christ, not one had entered this world without the devil's livery of a depraved nature upon him, being enmity against God; but when Christ appeared, "the prince of this world had nothing in him;" he was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners." He entered the field of this world wearing the white livery of original righteousness; and, no doubt, by

this very badge the devil would know him to be the promised seed of the woman, that was to bruise his head, which could not fail to strike him and his infernal legions with fear and terror, that now their kingdom was to fall, and their usurped empire was to be overturned.

3. Another day of vengeance was at the death of Christ, when "through death he that had the power of death was destroyed;" death was his own engine, his own contrivance, and he is destroyed by his own weapon.

4. Another day is the day of the last judgment; for which day they are said to be reserved in chains; plainly intimating, that whatever hell of misery the devil be in already, yet there is a farther vengeance abiding him at the second coming of Christ.

Secondly, I shall here only subjoin a few seasons when Christ is avenged upon this enemy in his members, or in the redeemed.

1. The vengeance of a Redeemer falls upon this enemy in the day of conversion; for then the Redeemer by the power of his sovereign grace, pulls the poor lamb out of the very jaws of the lion; the soul is then translated out of the power of darkness into the kingdom of his dear Son; the strongholds of that enemy, which he had reared up in the heart, are ruined.

2. The day of believing, when the poor soul, by the power of the Spirit of faith, is brought to set to its seal that God is true. The great work of the devil is to slander God in this world, as if he were not worthy of credit, as if his word were not to be trusted; he abode not in the truth himself, and he cannot endure to see any man or woman abiding in the truth, or assenting to it. This was the engine by which he ruined our first parents: at first he brought them to discredit what God had said concerning the evil and danger of eating the forbidden fruit: Yea, says he, has God said so and so to you? He persuaded them that it was otherwise than God had spoken, and then he had an easy prey of them. Thus, I say, it is Satan's main work to slander and reproach God, as if he were not to be trusted. Now, when a poor soul, notwithstanding all his arts and hellish subtleties, sets to its seal that God is true, and ventures its eternal salvation upon the veracity of a promising God in Christ; what can be more galling and tormenting unto that enemy, than when they who were his bond-slaves give him the lie, and subscribe to the truth of God in his word?

3. The renewed actings of faith under strong temptation is another season when the Redeemer's vengeance falls upon that enemy; this is a time when his fiery darts are quenched,

and made to recoil upon himself to his own disgrace. And O, how doth it gladden the heart of the great Captain of salvation, to see his soldiers acquitting themselves so well in the field of battle against his deadly enemy, resisting him and putting him to flight, and breaking his bows of steel in pieces!

4. The day of special nearness and access to God in his ordinances, when the poor believer is privileged to ride in the chariot of the wood of Lebanon with the King, brought into his banqueting-house, made to sit down under his shadow with great delight. The enemy cannot endure to see any intimacy between God and man: his great design, at first, was to make a breach; and when he sees the breach made up, and God and man on good terms, how must he grind his teeth for vexation to see his great design baffled? Then it is that God covers a table to his people, in the presence of their enemy, the enemy and avenger looking on with spite and vexation of spirit.

5. When the Redeemer rides in state in the chariot of the gospel through a land, when he "goes forth conquering, and to conquer," brings multitudes of souls to yield themselves to his obedience, this is a day of vengeance upon Satan and his kingdom. Luke x. 17, 18, when the seventy disciples returned from preaching the gospel among the cities of Israel, and gave Christ an account of their success with joy, he immediately answers, "I saw Satan fall like lightning from heaven." The disciples triumphed in their casting out of Satan from the bodies of men; but Christ sees, and rejoices in the fall of the devil from the interest he had in the souls of men, which is called his power in high places, Eph. vi. 12.

6. The day when an honourable testimony is given for Christ in a church, or among a people, against errors and blasphemies that the devil and his emissaries have vented, to the darkening of the Redeemer's glory, that is a day of vengeance upon Satan. Error is one of the main pillars of his kingdom, and one of his principal engines for hurting the kingdom of Christ, and poisoning the souls of men; now, when the church is helped to cleave firmly to the truth, and to bear witness to the Redeemer's glory, she "is terrible as an army with banners" to Satan and his emissaries.

7. The day of death, when the poor believer is guarded to glory through his principality, by some of these chariots of angels which accompanied Christ when he ascended: the poor believer then mounts up to heaven quite out of the reach of Satan's fiery darts; and this cannot shun to torment "the enemy and the avenger," as Satan is called, Psal. viii. 2. Thus you see what is the day of vengeance.

V. The *fifth* thing was, to *inquire why this day of vengeance is said to be in the Redeemer's heart?* To this I answer briefly in these two or three things. *The day of vengeance is in mine heart,* implies,

1. That he had firmly purposed, resolved upon it. It is, as if he had said, among the irreversible decrees of Heaven, That the head of the old serpent shall be broken by the seed of the woman.

2. *It is in mine heart,*—it implies, that the thoughts of it were a pleasure and delight unto him. As Christ delighted in the habitable parts of the earth, and rejoiced to come for the salvation of men; so at the time he rejoiced to take vengeance upon Satan, and ruin his kingdom, like a victorious and invincible general, he delighted to whet his glittering sword, and to render vengeance to his enemies, and a reward to those that hated him, and refused that he should rule over them.

3. *It is in mine heart,*—it implies, that he had not forgotten the quarrel he had with Satan and his works; no, no. As if he had said, Although it be some thousands of years since I said that I would bruise the head of that serpent; yet do not think that the quarrel is forgotten, no, it is fresh in my mind, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart;* although sentence be not speedily executed, yet I will be about with him, and when I go to work, I will accomplish it with a vengeance indeed.

4. *It is in mine heart,*—it implies, that the stated time of final vengeance lay as a secret in his own breast; for "the times and seasons he hath kept in his own power;" only this we know in general, the time will come when he sees it most for his own glory, and the good of the redeemed.

VI. The *sixth* thing was, the *Application* of this branch of the doctrine. The *first* use shall be by way of *Information* in these following particulars:—

1. Hence we may see a beautiful ray of the supreme Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, in opposition to that damnable error of Arianism that is now upon the field in the church of Scotland. What can be a clearer argument for proving him to be the supreme, self-existent, independent God, than this very word expressed by him in my text, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart?* Vengeance is the prerogative of God alone: Rom. xii. 19: "Vengeance is mine; and I will repay it, saith the Lord." Would ever the Son of God invade his Father's prerogative, if he were not the same in substance, equal in power and glory with his eternal Father? They who derogate from his divine glory, as if he were not the supreme God,

and the very same God numerically with the Father, join a confederacy with the powers of hell against the glorious Redeemer, and consequently lay themselves open to the same vengeance that is in the heart of the Redeemer against Satan and all his works; and, instead of getting thanks from the Father for lessening the glory of the Son, out of a pretended design of magnifying the glory of the Father, they expose themselves to the vengeance of the Father as well as of the Son; for it is the will of the Father, "That all men should honour the Son, as they honour the Father," with the same degree of honour; and the Father reckons himself disparaged when dirt is cast upon the face of his Son; for the Father declares, that even as our Mediator, "he hath given him a name above every name, that at," or in "the name of Jesus every knee should bow, and every tongue might confess, that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father." And I would earnestly recommend it to all that bear a hearty love to the Redeemer, and his cause and kingdom, that they may make their earnest prayer to God, that the next ensuing assembly may be guided of God to give a faithful and honourable testimony to his supreme Deity, which is called in question, and to pass a just and deserved censure upon that notorious blasphemer of "the KING of kings, and LORD of lords," the blessed avenger of our blood.

2. See from this doctrine how "the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward men hath appeared." Why, here is the greatest evidence of it that it was possible for God to give: he sends his own Son upon an expedition to this lower world, arms him with his power and authority as our Redeemer, to avenge our quarrel upon that Apollyon, the deceiver and destroyer of mankind; and when he is giving him his commission to bruise the serpent's head, he engages that his arm should be strengthened in his undertaking, and that he would "beat down his foes before his face, and plague all those that hated him," Psal. lxxxix. 23. O sirs, if we could but lift up the eye of faith, and view him in "his goings forth" in our quarrel, which "were of old, from everlasting," if we could but behold him in his marches and counter-marches in the pursuit of our enemy, we could not miss to join issue with the church, in the 1st verse of this chapter, saying, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?" O sirs, will you but behold the hue and colour of his garments, how they are dyed red with his own blood, and the blood of his enemies in avenging our quarrel, like one that treadeth in the wine-fat, and see if you can call his love and kindness in question.

3. See hence how much we that are called Christians are obliged to celebrate the memorials of his death. Why, he died in the resentment of our quarrel, and in avenging us of our enemy that had ruined and destroyed us; in bruising the head of the serpent, he had the heel of his human nature bruised, insomuch that his very blood and human soul was bruised out of his body: his death, as it was a satisfaction to justice; so, at the same time, it was a fatal blow given to Satan's kingdom in the world; it was a condemning of sin, that it might not have the power to condemn us; it was a tearing of our debt-bond to the law and justice of God, which, by our own consent, we were bound over to the power of sin and Satan for ever and ever. O then, are we not obliged to keep up the memorials of his death, in obedience to his own command, till he come again?

4. See hence the misery of all unbelievers, and why they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abides on them. The reason is, they will not join hands with the Son of God, the avenger of our blood; they will not come unto him for life, but will still cleave unto Satan, and join with him in studying to make God a liar; and therefore the devil's vengeance must light upon them: hence we find all unbelievers, who would not have Christ to rule over them, herded in with the devil and his angels in the final sentence of the last day: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." As if he had said, You would not come out of the devil's camp, you would needs work his works which I came to destroy; and now, therefore, you must drink of the cup of his vengeance for ever.

5. See hence the happiness and safety of believers, the redeemed of the Lord. Why, they are under the protection of the great Redeemer, and the day of vengeance is in his heart against all their enemies, vengeance upon Satan, and vengeance upon all that harm them. Sirs, whatever you may think of it, it is a dangerous thing to trouble or molest any that have the image of Christ in them; why, "Their Redeemer is mighty, the Lord of hosts is his name; and he has said, that "it is a righteous thing with him to render tribulation to those that trouble them;" he shall be "revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all them that know not God, and obey not the gospel."

6. See hence a good reason for patience under all the afflictions and persecutions of a present life. Why, believer, Christ has taken thy quarrel in hand, he has said, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart.* Believers have good reason to pity, and pray for them that despitefully use and persecute

them; for if mercy do not prevent, the Redeemer's vengeance will inevitably pursue them: and sure I am, there are none that have the Spirit of Jesus in them, but will be ready to say with the prophet Jeremiah, when speaking of his enemies, and when he saw the wrath that was coming upon them, "I have not desired the evil day, O Lord, thou knowest;" but rather that they may find mercy before the day of vengeance come.

7. See hence one great reason why Christ's visits are so sweet and acceptable to believers. One grand reason is, because whenever he comes to visit his redeemed, he takes vengeance on their grand enemy Satan, by relieving them from the oppression of sin, which is (as I said) the first-born of the devil. The apostle John tells us, "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, to destroy the works of the devil," 1 John iii. 8. And if you would know what the grand work of the devil is, see ver. 5, where it is said, "Ye know that he was manifested to take away our sins." This was the design of his manifestation in the flesh, this is the design of his manifestation by the word, and this is the design of his manifestation, whether at first conversion, or in his after visits and manifestations. And, therefore, it is no wonder though a poor believer, groaning under the body of sin, or under the temptations of Satan, cry out through the intenseness of his desire, "O when wilt thou come unto me!" "O that I knew where I might find him!" "O that it were with me as in months past!" Why, it is no wonder, the moment that the Redeemer sets his foot on the threshold of the believer's doors, all the works of the devil in the soul of the believer, by which he is burdened, fall down like Dagon before the ark of the Lord, the presence of Christ by his Spirit brings immediate relief.

Many other inferences might be made, if I were not afraid of time. As,

1. This doctrine lets us see why the devils cried out when they saw Christ even in the state of humiliation, saying, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus thou Son of God? art thou come to torment us before our time?" Why, the very sight of Christ our Redeemer was a terror to them, because they knew that the day of vengeance was in his heart against them.

2. See hence how it came that hell and earth took the alarm whenever the Son of God appeared upon the stage of time: Psal. ii.: "Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing? The kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers took counsel together, against the Lord, and his Messiah. Let us break their bands asunder, and cast

away their cords from us." Why was there such a commotion upon the earth at the coming of Christ? Why, the reason is plain, the day of vengeance upon Satan and upon his kingdom in the world was approaching. You know if a foreign enemy enter within the confines of a land, the king and all his subjects will be in a stir, every man flies to his arms. This was the very case, the devil was the god of this world, and the world was living peaceably under his government; Christ was a foreign enemy come to invade his kingdom, and to put down the devil from his kingdom, and take the government to himself; and therefore the devil and all his confederates rage, and take the alarm, because one was come who had vengeance in his heart against him and his kingdom.

3. See hence the mystery of the conversion of the thief upon the cross, to whom Christ said, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Why, Christ would show his power over the devil and his kingdom, even in his lowest state of humiliation; when he was bruising the serpent's head, at the expense of the bruising of his own heel, he would let one of the devil's prisoners go free, and so assert his own power in setting the captives of the mighty free, and delivering the prey from the terrible.

4. See hence the reason why the day of a sinner's conversion is called the day of Christ's power, Psal. cx. 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." The reason is, because it is a day when the arm of the Lord is revealed, and the exceeding great and mighty power of a Redeemer is exerted, in taking vengeance on Satan, and liberating the soul from his dominion.

5. See why Christ is said to be "given for a leader and commander unto the people." The reason is, because, as Captain of the hosts of the Lord, he heads all the redeemed in their warfare against death, sin, and the world, and fights all their battles for them, and through him they are conquerors, yea, more than conquerors.

6. See hence one reason why the Old Testament church longed so much for the coming of Christ in the flesh; Abraham rejoiced to see his day afar off; the saints expressed the greatest longings for his coming. Oh! "Till the day break, and the shadows flee away, turn, my beloved, and be thou like a roe." The reason why they longed so much for this day, was, because they saw that the day of vengeance was coming upon Satan and his works. And for the same reason the New Testament church longs for his coming in the power of his Spirit, and his second coming at the last day; because then the day of complete redemption will come from sin, Sa-

tan, unbelief, enmity, atheism, and every thing that now creates them any trouble.

7. See hence a good reason for that command to "put off the unfruitful works of darkness, and to put on the armour of light," and why we are to "resist even unto blood, striving against sin." Why, the reason is, because "he that committeth sin is of the devil," 1 John iii. 8; that is, he is on the devil's side, and he is doing his drudgery work, and the vengeance of a Redeemer is to come upon him and all his works, and all his servants who work his work. O sirs, if you have any dread of the Redeemer's vengeance, if you have any love to Christ, or any hatred to the devil, beware of sin; for every sin is an affront offered to Christ, and a gratifying the devil, and a helping up with his kingdom in the world.

8. See from this doctrine what ground we have to look out for a day of vengeance to be fast coming. Why, the works of the devil, which Christ came to destroy, every where abound among us, such as atheism, error, ignorance, unbelief, contempt of the glorious gospel, and barrenness under it; cursing, swearing, perjury, blasphemy, Sabbath-breaking, murder, adulteries, thefts, robberies, cheating, lying, stealing, covetousness, and all manner of iniquity, abounds; these are the works of the devil. And, therefore, seeing these abound, have we not reason to fear, lest vengeance be in his heart against us.

9. See hence what a dangerous thing it is to hurt the spouse of Christ, to do any injury to the church. Why, the vengeance of the Lord, the vengeance of his temple, will certainly pursue all those who pollute or profane his temple. Satan is at this day fetching a stroke at the temple of God, striking at the sacred constitution of the church; but be who or what they will, who venture to "defile the temple of God, them will God destroy," they draw down the Redeemer's resentment upon themselves.

The *second* use may be of *Terror* to all that are in the devil's camp, wearing his livery, and waging war under his colours against the Son of God. Wo to you if you tarry long there, for the heavy vengeance of the Redeemer will be upon you, if you do not quickly make your escape. See what the Lord says with respect to you, Deut. xxxii. 41: "If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and will reward them that hate me." More particularly, I will tell you a few sorts of men on whom the day of vengeance is hastening.

1. Upon wicked and ungodly rulers and magistrates: Psal. lxxvi. 12: "He will cut off the spirit of princes: he is ter-

rible to the kings of the earth. He strikes through kings in the day of his wrath;" for example, Belshazzar's Mene Tekel makes his joints to loose, and his knees to smite against each other.

2. The day of vengeance will be upon all idol shepherds, unfaithful ministers who do not give faithful warning from his mouth, but clap the heads, and strengthen the hands of the wicked in a way of sin, Ezek. xxxiii. 8: Zech. xi. 17.

3. To all those that are injurious to his faithful ambassadors in the discharge of their duty and commission: 2 Chron. xxxvi. 16: "They mocked the messengers of God, and despised his words, and misused his prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against his people, till there was no remedy."

4. To all profaners of the name of God: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." They that tear his name, he will tear them, when none can help them.

5. Upon all Sabbath-breakers, who look upon God's day as a burden, Amos viii. 5: "The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, that he will not forget their works; for this the land shall tremble, and every one that dwelleth therein shall mourn.

6. Upon all that are undutiful to parents, whether natural, civil, or spiritual: "The eye that mocketh at his father, and despiseth to obey his mother, the ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young eagles shall eat it." All that resist lawful magistracy in their lawful commands, Romans xiii. 2.

7. Upon all that are guilty of shedding innocent blood, murdering their neighbour in a fit of passion, or destroying the fruits of their own bodies. The blood of Abel cried for vengeance against his brother Cain; and God has ordained, that "whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed."

8. Upon all unclean persons: "Whoremongers and adulterers God will judge." The darts of divine vengeance shall strike through the liver and heart of the unclean.

9. Upon all that are unjust in their dealings between man and man, by stealing, and overreaching their neighbour. The broad flying roll of the curse of God enters into the house of the thief, Zech. v. 2—4.

10. All perjured persons, and covenant-breakers, whether national or personal: "Shall he break the covenant and escape? I will send a sword to avenge the quarrel of my covenant."

11. All covetous persons, who are discontented with their

lot, and envy the prosperity of their neighbours. Vengeance pursued Ahab for coveting Naboth's vineyard. They are idolaters in God's reckoning, the men of the world, whose portion is in this life.

All that wallow in sensuality, such as drinking, gluttony, and revelling, the vengeance of a Redeemer will pursue them: "Their God is their belly, and their end is destruction."

Again, upon all hypocrites: Is. xxxiii. 14: "The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surprised the hypocrites: who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?"

Upon all that continue in ignorance under the means of knowledge: "He that made them will not have mercy on them, and he that formed them will show them no favour," Is. xxvii. 11.

Apostates, who, after a profession, fall back again with "the dog to his vomit, and with the sow to her wallowing in the mire. Backsliders in heart shall be filled with their own ways."

All who, by their untender walk, grieve and offend the generation of the righteous: "Wo unto the world because of offences: but wo to that man by whom the offence cometh, it were better for you that a millstone were hanged about your neck, and that you were cast into the depth of the sea."

This doctrine, I say, speaks terror to all such, because they "are of their father the devil," and do his works; and therefore the vengeance of a Redeemer is pursuing them. I should have begun with unbelievers, who do not obey the gospel: "He will come in flaming fire, taking vengeance upon them, because they obey not the gospel; they are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God."

The *third* use may be of *Consolation* to all the redeemed of the Lord. Has Christ avenged thy quarrel with the dyeing of his garments, upon Satan thy grand enemy? Has he for thy sake invaded his kingdom, slain his first-born, wrested the keys of hell and death out of his hand, loaded him with chains, made an open spectacle of him and his fellow angels, and is he to shut him up in hell for ever, and all on thy account? Then hence many things may be inferred for the comfort and encouragement of the redeemed of the Lord.

1. Thy kind Kinsman, the avenger of thy blood, will surely pay thy debt, and stand between thee and all the charges that either law, or conscience, or justice, or the devil, or the world has against thee. Would he ever avenge thy blood upon Satan, and yet suffer thee to sink under the charge of

the law of justice? No, no; "he stands at the right hand of the poor, to save him from them that would condemn his soul." And therefore thou mayest lift up thy head with joy and boldness, saying, "Who can lay any thing to my charge? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," &c. Yea, at the same time that he spoiled principalities and powers on the cross; he tore the handwriting that was against thee, nailing it to his cross.

2. Here is comfort against remaining corruption and indwelling sin. Perhaps thou art crying, "O wretched man that I am!" Well, here is help at hand; he that has avenged thy blood on Satan, by bruising his head, he will never suffer his work to stand long in thy soul; no, no; down they must go; all his strong-holds shall go to ruin. Art thou pestered with the prevalence of unbelief, ever turning thee away from the living God? Well, the Redeemer's vengeance will destroy that, for it is one of the works of the devil; he is "the Author and Finisher of faith;" and therefore he must answer his name, and fulfil in thee all the good pleasure of his goodness, and the work of faith with power." Art thou pestered with remaining enmity? Well, this is a work of the devil, to fill the mind of man with enmity and prejudice against God, who is love; and therefore the day of vengeance is in his heart against that also: he has already slain the enmity on God's part by his blood, and he will slay the enmity on thy part more and more by his Spirit; and as he carries on the work of faith, he will also carry on the work of love; for faith worketh by love; and the Spirit of faith is also a spirit of love. Art thou groaning under remaining ignorance, that thou canst not win to more knowledge of Christ, and of God in him, more knowledge of his will? Well, this is a work of the devil, his kingdom is a kingdom of darkness; and the Redeemer's vengeance shall be upon it also; for he is "the true light, that lighteth every man that cometh into the world;" and as he has already begun to shine into thy heart by the light of the knowledge of his glory; so thou shalt find his goings forth prepared as the morning, and thy path shall be "as the shining light, which shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Art thou burdened with the legality of thy spirit, a strong inclination to rest on the works of righteousness done by thee, rather than upon Christ and his righteousness, the only foundation that God hath laid in Zion? Well, here is comfort, this work of the devil shall be destroyed more and more by the Avenger of thy blood, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and to them will he show his covenant." He will more and more wean thy heart from the way of works, and reconcile thee more

and more to the way of grace through Jesus Christ; for he has said, That "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, by Jesus Christ our Lord." In a word, not to multiply particulars, whatever sin or lust usurps the throne of Christ in thy heart, down it shall go, the Redeemer's vengeance shall be upon it as a work of the devil; for he has said, "I will subdue their iniquities. From all idols will I cleanse them. Sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace."

3. Is Christ the Avenger of thy blood upon Satan? Then, surely, he will not suffer that enemy continually to harass thee with his fiery darts; no, he will still this enemy and avenger; he will either rebuke the tempter, or else his grace shall be sufficient for thee, and his strength shall be so perfected in thy weakness, that, through thy God assisting thee, thou shalt leap over his walls, and break his bows of steel in pieces; yea, his faithfulness is engaged that he "will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able to bear, but with the temptation will provide a way to escape, that thou mayst be able to bear it.

4. Art thou covered with the dark clouds of desertion, crying, "O that I knew where I might find him?" Here is comfort, he that has avenged thy blood upon Satan, will not himself keep thee long in torment with his own absence; "he will not contend for ever, neither will he be always wroth; lest the spirit should fail before him, and the soul which he has made." "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." "For a small moment have I forsaken thee, but with great mercies will I gather thee. In a little wrath I hid my face from thee, for a moment; but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy on thee, saith the Lord thy Redeemer."

5. Here is comfort against the fears of apostacy, or falling away, to the reproach of religion, and the ruin of thy soul for ever. He that has avenged thy blood, and pulled thee out of the paw of that enemy, will not quit thee; all his saints are in his hand; he keeps them by his power through faith to salvation, and no man, no devil, shall be able to pluck thee out of his hand. And therefore thou mayst sing and say, "Though I fall, I shall arise; for the Lord upholdeth me with his hand."

6. Here is comfort, he that has avenged thy blood will supply thy wants, both outward and inward. Would he ever do so much for thee, and then suffer thee to starve? No, no; "My God shall supply all your need, according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." Thy Kinsman is full-

handed, he doth not want, and thou shalt want nothing that is good for thee.

7. The Avenger of thy blood will take care of thee in public reelings; when the mountains are removed, and the waters roar, he sitteth upon the floods, and he will make all things work together for thy good.

8. The Avenger of thy blood will pity and sympathize with thee in all thy afflictions.

9. He will strengthen thee for the work to which he calls thee, whatever weakness be in thee, for "he giveth power to the faint."

10. *Lastly*, The Avenger of thy blood, will make thee victorious over death, the last enemy: "Death shall be swallowed up in victory." He has made the grave a bed of rest, a passage to thy Father's house and kingdom, and he himself will carry thee through Jordan; and therefore thou mayst say in faith, "This God is our God, for ever and ever; and he will be our guide even unto death."

THE ANNALS OF REDEEMING LOVE, WITH THE REDEEMER'S VENGEANCE UPON THE GRAND ENEMY OF THE REDEEMED.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—Is. LXIII. 4.

THE FOURTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

THE *fourth* use shall be of *Exhortation*. Is it so that the day of vengeance was, and still is, in the heart of our glorious Redeemer? has he avenged our quarrel upon the old serpent, by bruising his head, and ruining his usurped kingdom and dominion? Then,

First, In the name of our kind Kinsman, the glorious Avenger of our blood, I proclaim liberty to all the vassals of hell, to all the prisoners of the prince of darkness. O sirs, the devil has made prisoners of the whole family of Adam; "because we rebelled against the words of God, and contemned the counsel of the Most High," therefore we are made "to sit in darkness and the shadow of death," bound and manacled by the god of this world, with the cords of our own

iniquity as with fetters of iron: but I "bring you glad tidings of great joy," our Goel, our Redeemer and Avenger, has broken up the devil's prison; he has broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron asunder: and he comes and cries to his prisoners to *come forth*, to them that sit in darkness, *Show yourselves*. And therefore we, as the heralds of this great King, has the armies which are in heaven following him, and whose name is written upon his thigh and vesture, "The KING of kings, and LORD of lords;" I say, we, as heralds sent forth in his name, proclaim the year of jubilee to you, the year of release and freedom from your bondage and captivity to this enemy. The Son of God makes you free, and therefore be you free indeed: he "proclaims liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound;" liberty from the guilt of sin, that it may not condemn; liberty from the power of sin, that it may not reign in your mortal bodies; liberty from the filth and defilement of sin, that it may not obstruct fellowship between God and you; liberty from the law as a covenant, that it shall not have power to condemn you; liberty from the power of death and the grave, that it may not sting you, or have the victory over you; liberty from this present evil world, that it may not insnare you; liberty from all your enemies, that you "may serve the Lord without fear, in holiness and righteousness all the days of your lives." O sirs, I proclaim this acceptable year of liberty and release from captivity to all these enemies to you. O, for the the Lord's sake, accept of the liberty that your Kinsman and Avenger of your blood proclaims to you his kinsfolk.

This exhortation and call to accept of liberty from the power of darkness, from the dominion of Satan, the prince of darkness, has such a charm with it to every rational and thinking person, that one would think there needed no motives or arguments to persuade people to fall in with it. Those who are in hard temporal bondage and thraldom will purchase their liberty with the most valuable things they have in the world; and they who are in possession of their liberty, will spend not only their estates and substance, but their very blood in the maintenance and defence thereof; persons will quit their lives, rather than give up even their temporal liberty. Who doubts but if a company of men were shut up in a prison by their powerful enemy, who designs their death, if one more powerful should come and vanquish him, and break up the prison doors, and call the prisoners to go free; I say, who doubts but, in that case, every prisoner would make his escape, every one would [endeavour to] run out of the prison faster than another? But, sirs,

although this liberty that our Kinsman proclaims to us be infinitely more valuable than all the temporal liberties of the world; yet sad experience lets us know, that the greater part of the hearers of the gospel, to whom the Lord's jubilee and year of freedom is proclaimed, choose rather to be the devil's bond-men, and to continue under the bonds of iniquity that he has wreathed about them, than to accept of this glorious liberty that I am speaking of; Satan has so bewitched and intoxicated them with sin, that they lie still in the devil's fetters, as if their bondage were perfect freedom and liberty, and never reckon themselves at liberty, unless they be "walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." And therefore, I say, though one would think men needed no motive to persuade them to accept of liberty; yet such is the backwardness of the heart of man, through the power that Satan and sin has upon them, that we must not only proclaim liberty to them, but we must use arguments to persuade them to it: and therefore allow me, in the name of our kind Friend and Avenger, to speak to you in a rational way; for we are dealing with men and women that must be "drawn with the cords of love, and the bands of a man." O that God by his Spirit may both persuade and enable you to comply with the call.

Motive 1. Will you consider the evil and danger of that bondage and captivity you are under. It is the most comfortless captivity; no comfort in the pit of sin, which is the devil's prison, therefore called "a pit wherein there is no water," Zech. ix. 11. Indeed, Satan promises pleasure, profit, and comfort, in the way of sin, and in his service; but, alas! it is but like the crackling of thorns under a pot, or a glass of sweet poison, which as soon as it is swallowed down, it is like the gall of asps in the bowels: "There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." The bondage thou art under, O sinner, is a wearisome bondage; sinners are said to "weary themselves to commit iniquity." Many a wearisome day has the sinner in the devil's service; he leads them about, as it were, in a chain, and makes them to drudge in gratifying this, and that, and the other lust. It is a disgraceful bondage to be the devil's drudge, who is himself "reserved in chains under darkness, unto the judgment of the great day." Oh who would choose to serve, and to be servant to that chained roaring lion! It is the most cruel bondage that ever was; this enemy and avenger, handles poor creatures that are under his power in the most barbarous manner, torturing both soul and body: you have an emblem of his cruelty, in that poor man, Mark v. 2, 5; and Luke viii. 27. It is a terrible

bondage; there they are said to dwell in darkness, and in the regions of the shadow of death, where there is nothing but horror and terror, a terror to themselves, and to others round about them. O sirs, who would not accept of liberty from such a captivity and bondage?

Mot. 2. By way of motive, will you consider what kind of freedom and liberty the Son of God, the Avenger of our blood, offers and presents to you; it is a liberty never enough to be wondered at, that ever the Son of God should have taken our nature, a nature inferior to that of angels, in order to his having the right of redemption as our Kinsman and Avenger, who had violated the law, trampled upon the authority of his Father; that he should come from Edom and Bozrah dyeing his garments with his own blood, and the blood of his enemies, in order to our release. May we not cry out with admiration, as the church does in the 1st verse, "Who is this that cometh? Who would ever thought he would have undertaken such an expedition on our behalf? And then will you consider, that this liberty we proclaim to you, was purchased with a great sum, as that captain said, Acts xxii. 28: "With a great sum obtained I this freedom." It cost our Kinsman dear, not silver nor gold, but the very blood of his heart. It is the most real freedom; it is not an imaginary thing, no, "If the Son make you free, you shall be free indeed." It is a glorious freedom, you shall be preferred "to the glorious liberty of the children of God, you shall be fellow-heirs with the general assembly and church of the first-born," who are all "heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." And your liberty shall not last for a day, a year, or an age, but it shall last for ever; you shall have a final discharge and manumission, neither sin nor Satan shall any more have dominion over you, if you will accept of this liberty that our Kinsman and Avenger of our blood offers and proclaims to you. Indeed, Satan and sin may tempt you, and endeavour to reduce you under your former slavery; but they shall never be able, no man, no devil, shall ever be able to pluck you out of the hands of our Kinsman; you shall be "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." O sirs, shall not such a liberty be greedily accepted? To all this, I shall only add, that although the Son of God paid dear for this liberty that he proclaims to you, yet you have it for nothing; no terms, no hard condition is required of you, only accept of freedom, and you "shall be free indeed:" no money, no price, only "go forth."

Mot. 3. Consider, sirs, that the devil has no law-right to detain you in his captivity; he lost his right when justice was satisfied by the blood of our Kinsman. What right has the

jailer to keep a person in prison when the judge is satisfied by a friend, and the debt completely paid to the creditor? So that it is wrongful imprisonment, especially after the King's proclamation of liberty is issued out. But I tell you more: as the devil has no right, so he has no power to detain you prisoners or captives against your own will. Indeed the devil has blinded the understanding, and so perverted the will, that they are volunteers in his service, they willingly walk after his commandment; but the devil can force no man's will; if once you were but willing, heartily willing, to be liberated from Satan's bondage, the business were done. O sirs, put your wills in the hand of our Kinsman, that, according to his promise, he may make you willing in the day of his power. But O what encouragement is it to you to accept of freedom, that the devil has neither right nor power to detain you his prisoners contrary to your own will!

Mot. 4. By accepting of this liberty, you will make glad the heart of Christ, and make our Kinsman "see the travail of his soul." He travailed in soul in order to obtain our freedom from the power of sin and Satan; yea, he travailed till his "soul was exceeding sorrowful, even unto death:" Will you be so unkind, after all his hard and sore travail, as to deny him that satisfaction which he desires so much; namely, to see you fairly freed from the hands of Satan? And, on the other hand, it will affront him, it will grieve him to the heart, if you remain in your chains under the power of Satan, refusing to be delivered from the power of that enemy, after he has invaded his kingdom, and destroyed him through his own death. How did he weep over Jerusalem, who refused the relief and freedom that he proclaimed to them in the days of his flesh! he said with tears, "O that thou, even thou, in this thy day, hadst known the things which belong unto thy peace! He would have gathered them, as the hen gathers her brood under her wings, but they would not."

Mot. 5. You will gratify the devil, if you reject this offered liberty, and give him an occasion of insulting over our glorious Redeemer, as if his bondage were better than Christ's liberty that he has been at so much cost to purchase. And can you find in your hearts to furnish that enemy with an opportunity of upbraiding our glorious Redeemer? But, on the other hand, if you accept of this liberty, and freedom which Christ offers you, it will gall the enemy at the very heart; for, as I was saying in the doctrinal part, it is a day of galling vengeance to Satan, when he sees a poor creature going out of his prison, and going in to Christ's side. So, then, would you do the devil a disservice (I am sure you owe him

nothing,) then accept of the freedom and liberty which our glorious Avenger purchased with his blood, and proclaims to every one of you in this glorious gospel.

To all which I shall only add, that if you do not, your ruin is of yourselves, and your blood shall be upon your own head. O how just will your condemnation be, who had liberty in your offer, and yet chose rather to continue in the devil's chains! Surely your bonds cannot miss to be made stronger, and your condemnation shall be more just than that of the devil himself; for the devil never had liberty offered him, otherwise he would have accepted of it with all his heart; but for sinners under the drop of the gospel, they had life, liberty, and salvation proclaimed to them, and yet preferred death to life, bondage to liberty, damnation to salvation.

Object. You press us to accept of liberty from Satan's bondage; but what if Christ never designed or decreed that liberty for me: if I be not among the elect, I shall never get free of my bondage. *Answ.* This objection is just one of the wiles that the devil makes use of to dissuade sinners from attempting to get free of his service and dominion; it is a mere sophism, and when it is rightly considered, it is as weak as water: for it is just all one as if a company of prisoners lying under sentence of death, when their prison-doors are opened, their jailer bound neck and heel, and the king's proclamation intimated to the prisoners to come forth; I say, it is just as if the prisoners, in this case, should begin to say, Though the prison be opened, and the king's proclamation read in our hearing; yet we do not know if the king has an intention or design in his heart that we should take the advantage and make our escape; we do not know if he intends that we should lie continual prisoners; and therefore we will just lie still where we are. Who would not reckon the prisoners a company of madmen who would argue at such a rate? Why, how is the king's mind to be known but by his overt act or proclamation? So here the devil tells you, that you need not accept of liberty from sin and Satan, because you do not know if Christ has designed this liberty for you. Why, how shall you ever know the mind of Christ but by his word, his proclamation of grace, which is the very picture of his thoughts and designs? O sirs, look always into the heart of God, and the designs of God by his words of grace, his acts of grace, his proclamations of grace; and if you do, you shall find nothing but grace and love, and mercy in his heart to you: but if you will take the devil's way, and look to God's heart and secret thoughts, without looking to his words, and believing what he speaks to you, there is no help for it, you shall perish with the devil.

Object. You bid us accept of freedom from Satan's bondage; but, alas! our bands are so strong that we have no power to shake them off, or accept of this liberty. *Answ.* The question between Christ and you is not, Are you able to quit the devil's bondage and slavery? But the question is, Are you willing? And if you be but willing to be made free, all the devils in hell cannot detain you.

Object. There, indeed, lies the stress of the matter; my will has got such a woful cast, that I cannot get it bended toward this offered freedom. *Answ.* If the iron sinew of the obstinate will be too strong for thee to bend, put it in the hand of Christ, thy blessed Kinsman, that he may do the work for thee, "Thy people shall be willingnesses in the day of thy power." And it is a sweet evidence of a soul already made willing, that he is groaning under the sense of the backwardness of his heart to yield to the call of Christ. And, for your encouragement to put your obstinate will in his hand, you have him bound by promise to do the work, even to "take away the stony heart, and to give the heart of flesh," that is, to master the enmity and obstinacy of the heart and will against him: O plead the promise, believe the promise, put him to his word, and pursue him upon his word before a throne and court of grace; for he never said nay to a person that took this method. And then it is the pleasure of Christ to take vengeance upon Satan, by driving out the devil's poison of enmity and obstinacy from the heart of the sinner. And therefore let the words of my text be a ground of faith to you as to this matter, *For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.* The Lord bless his word.

THE ANNALS OF REDEEMING LOVE, WITH THE REDEEMER'S VENGEANCE UPON THE GRAND ENEMY OF THE REDEEMED.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—Is. LXIII. 4.

THE FIFTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

My *second* exhortation from the doctrine is this, If it be so that our blessed Goel, our kind Kinsman and Redeemer, has avenged our quarrel upon Satan, by invading his kingdom, counteracting his projects for our ruin, by slaying his first-born, by wresting the keys of death and hell out of his hand, and laying him under chains of darkness, unto the judgment of the great day, and the like; I say, has our Kinsman done all this in the resentment of our quarrel against that enemy? O then let this encourage you to put your trust under the shadow of his wings, commit the keeping of your souls, and of all your everlasting concerns, to him, for our Kinsman *careth for you;* if he had had no care about us, or kindness for us, would he ever have spent his blood, and dyed his garments in our quarrel? O sirs, whom will we ever trust, if we do not trust him, who came "travelling in the greatness of his strength," to engage with, and destroy the powers of hell, for the injury they had done us? "How excellent is that loving-kindness" which excited and engaged him to undertake this expedition! What amazing love to lost sinners of Adam's family breathe in these words, when viewed as a threatening against the powers of hell, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart!* Now, I say the duty, and the first duty, to which this grace and love of our glorious Kinsman should engage us, is to confide and trust in him. This is the very leading design of the gospel, and of the whole revelation of the word concerning Christ; and therefore be exhorted to fall in with it, and trust this kind Friend that "sticketh closer than a brother." This is a matter of the last importance and concern to every one that hears the gospel, and upon which the happiness or misery of the precious soul through an endless eternity depends; therefore, to clear the exhortation a little, I shall obviate and answer a few questions.

Quest. 1. What is that to which you call us, when you bid us trust this kind Friend, this Redeemer of our blood?

I answer, 1. It necessarily supposes a deep and hearty concern about salvation or deliverance from that thraldom, bondage, and misery that we are brought under by Satan and his first-born, sin. O sirs, you who never yet saw yourselves to be the devil's prisoners, under the power of the guilt and filth of sin by virtue of a broken law, and who were never brought under a deep and hearty concern how to make your escape, crying, with the jailer, "What shall I do to be saved?" whatever may be your pretensions of trusting in Christ, they are but all hypocritical and notional; for "the law is our school-master, to lead us unto Christ, that we may be justified by faith."

2. This trust has in it a cordial approbation of the person and undertakings of our blessed Kinsman and Redeemer, in order to our freedom and delivery from this bondage to sin and Satan, an approbation of it as a method worthy every way of Infinite Wisdom, and of all others most suited and adapted to the glory of God, and safety of the sinner. Whenever a sinner is awakened, and hath his eyes opened to take up his lost and ruined condition, these two questions very naturally cast up, namely, How shall God be glorified? and how shall ever I be saved in a consistency with his glory? Now, when Christ is discovered, and the method of salvation through him opened to the soul's view, it is made to see these questions sweetly answered in him; it sees how Christ restores glory to God and to all his attributes, and salvation to the lost ruined sinner: "Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace kiss each other," in this method of salvation; and this draws out the soul's cordial approbation of this glorious device, saying, "This is my rest, for my soul desires it."

3. It has in it a renouncing of all other ways and means of relief, saying with those [mentioned,] Jer. iii. 23: "In vain is salvation hoped for from the hills, and multitude of mountains; in the Lord our God is the salvation of Israel." And, Hos. xiv. 3: "Ashur shall not save us, we will not ride upon horses, neither will we say any more to the work of our hands, Ye are our gods." Phil. iii. 3: "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the Spirit, who rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh." O sirs, Christ is never the first course or method that a sinner takes for salvation; no, no, he is always the last shift; many a way will the man try before he land in Christ. While in a state of profanity, living in manifest contempt of the law, the man ordinarily trusts to the general mercy of God, imagining, with some, that it is enough to bring them to heaven, if they have as much time in a dying hour, as to cry, "God have

mercy upon my soul." When the man is brought, through a spirit of conviction, to see that this will not do, he then runs to the way of works by the law, and tries what he can do for his own salvation by his reformation, his prayers, tears, vows, penances, and the like. When the man has wearied himself in pursuit of salvation in this way, and finds the law so holy, so spiritual and extensive, that it is impossible for him to obey it perfectly, then he will join Christ and the law together, I mean Christ and his law-works, and thinks with himself, Now I cannot scale heaven, or make out salvation by my own obedience, it is so defective; but wherein I am deficient in obedience to it, I will rely upon Christ's righteousness to supply my defects. Thus he takes the new cloth of Christ's righteousness to patch up his own filthy rags. And here it is that many a man stays, without going a step farther, seeking salvation by Christ and the law together, which is the thing the apostle calls a "seeking righteousness," not directly, but "as it were by the works of the law." But when a sinner is brought really to trust in the Lord Jesus, he receives him, and rests upon him alone as he is offered in the gospel, disclaiming his own "righteousness as filthy rags," saying with the apostle, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, I count all things but loss, for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

4. This trusting in Christ carries in it a satisfaction with the warrant that God affords in his word for intermeddling with Christ and his salvation. It is a very ordinary case with those who are awakened to a due concern about salvation, to have this language in their mouths: O it is true, Christ is a suitable and sufficient Saviour, "able to save to the uttermost;" but, alas! I do not know if I have a right or warrant to intermeddle with him, I am afraid I should be guilty of presumption. Now, when a man believes in Christ, or trusts in him for salvation from sin and Satan, hell and wrath, he looks to the word, and there he sees that Christ is held out as the ordinance of God for the salvation of sinners of mankind; that this Son is given to us, born to us; there he finds the word of grace and salvation endorsed and directed to all and every creature, that "the promise is even to us, and our children, and to all that are afar off, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call" by the joyful sound; there he finds God commanding and requiring every man to "believe in the name of his Son Jesus Christ, to look unto him and be saved." And upon these and the like grounds the man is persuaded that he has sufficient warrant to receive Christ, and rest the salvation of his soul upon him, without danger of

presumption; and upon this he ventures his salvation upon him. O sirs, take care that you set the foot of faith upon a [sure] ground; and I do not know how our faith in Christ can ever be well founded, without finding our warrant for it in the word; the word is the immediate ground of faith, and without it we could never believe, Psal. cxix. 49: "Remember the word, upon which thou hast caused thy servant to hope." Psal. cxxx. 5: "In his word do I hope."

5. Thus trusting in Christ, as our Avenger and Redeemer, has in it a firm and full persuasion of Christ's willingness and ability to rescue and deliver us from the hands of Satan and sin, and all our spiritual enemies; yea, a persuasion of his faithfulness, that, according to his promise, he will deliver. The poor soul is persuaded of his ability from the word, because there it finds the record of God concerning him, that he is "mighty to save, able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God through him." It is persuaded of his willingness, from the same record; because there he finds it said, "Come to me" who will, "I will in no wise cast out." Would he ever come upon such an expedition to avenge the quarrel of lost sinners, to "finish transgression, and make an end of sin," if he were not willing to save a lost sinner that comes to him! It is persuaded of his faithfulness, that he will save according to his promise, that he will pity and pardon, and heal and deliver, according to his promise, because it is impossible for God to lie. "Hath he said it, and will he not do it?" yea, surely, "yet a little while, and he that shall come will come, and will not tarry."

6. And, more directly, When a person trusts this glorious Redeemer and Kinsman for salvation, he is not only persuaded in general of the power, goodness, and faithfulness of the Lord Jesus; but he is persuaded of all this with particular application of him and of salvation to his own soul in particular; the man is confident, that whatever Christ has purchased with his blood, and whatever he has promised in the covenant, shall in due time be forthcoming to him, and he relies and rests on the security he finds in the word, in the promise, or covenant of God sealed with the blood of his blessed Kinsman; he takes Christ as held out in his word of grace and says, "This is all my salvation, God hath spoken in his holiness, I will rejoice;" this is mine, and that is mine, and all is mine, because "God hath spoken in his holiness;" I have his word for it, and that is enough; this faith is "the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for." And although God may see fit to defer the actual accomplishment of the promise, and thus his heart is made sick; yet when he views the good things promised, faith reckons

them its own, upon the security God has granted in the promise; and therefore says with the church, Mic. vii. 7—9, "I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my salvation: my God will hear me." "Though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me; he will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." I do not say that this trust and confidence is always alike strong in all believers, or yet in the self-same believer; for sad experience makes it evident beyond all contradiction, that the believer's confidence of faith may be, and actually is, many times sadly shaken, through the prevalence of unbelief, the assaults of temptation, and providences seemingly running contrary to the promise; by reason of which, the poor believer has many doubts, many fears and staggerings; so that sometimes he is made to cry out, "Is his mercy clean gone? will he be favourable no more? doth his promise fail for evermore?" "One day I shall fall by the hand of Saul;" and in his haste he is made to cry out, "All men are liars," the prophets of God not excepted. But these doubts, and fears, and staggerings, although they may be in the believer, yet they are not in his faith; these things argue the infirmity of his faith, indeed; but under all this, faith is fighting for the victory, and as much faith in Christ as the man has in exercise, so much confidence will he have respecting the outmaking of the promise to him in particular; and according to the degree of one's crediting the promise with application to himself, so much confidence and persuasion will he have.

But now, that I may clear this act of faith, or of trusting in the Lord Jesus, a little farther to you, I shall endeavour to illustrate it by two or three similitudes:—

1. Then, It is just such another trust, as when you trust a man of undoubted veracity and faithfulness. When an honest man gives you his word, his promise, whether it be a verbal word, or his written and subscribed word, for any thing, you all know what it is in such a case to trust him; if a day of payment be specified in the promise, you are confident and persuaded of payment against that day; if there be no day named, yet still you are confident, that in due time he will make out his promise. After this manner Abraham, the father of the faithful, believed the promise of God, Rom. iv. 20: "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God." O sirs, have you trust and confidence to put in the word of a man? will you take his promise, and rest upon it with assured confidence; and shall we have no trust to put in the man Christ Jesus, in whose mouth guile was never found, or in the report or record of God concerning him, for whom it is

impossible to lie! Allow me to tell you, that every mere man, whom you have trusted since you came into the world, will stand in judgment and condemn you, saying you had confidence to put in me, but you had no confidence to put in a promising God in Christ. Will not Christ say at the day of reckoning to unbelievers, You trusted such a man's word when he made a promise to you; but though you had my word, my oath, my covenant, sealed with my blood, and though the three that bear record in heaven attested the truth of the promise that I gave you; yet you had no trust or credit to give to me. I could never obtain that trust from you that you gave to very ordinary persons, you treated me and my Father as though we had been liars, dissemblers, and disingenuous? O how will the unbeliever be confounded at the day of reckoning when this shall be laid home to his door, by the great Judge of all the earth, the man Christ Jesus, the blessed Avenger of our blood upon Satan! he himself will then "whet his glittering sword," and "render vengeance to all that know not God, and obey not the gospel."

2. This trusting in Christ, is just such a trust as a man has in a strong-hold or hiding-place to which he betakes himself for shelter and safety; or such a trust as the chickens have under the wings of the hen, when she covers them with her feathers: Ruth ii. 12: "The Lord God of Israel reward thee, under whose wings thou art come to trust." Psal. xxxvi. 7: "How excellent is thy loving-kindness, O God! therefore the sons of men shall put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." Psal. xci. 4: "He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust: his truth shall be thy shield and buckler." O sinners, you lie exposed to the wrath of God, to the cruelty of Satan, that enemy and avenger, who "goes about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour;" you are in danger of the curse of a broken law. Now, to trust in Christ, is just to run in under the covert of his blood and righteousness, as the young chickens run in under the wings of the hen, or as the man-slayer, under the law, ran in to the city of refuge, and trusted that he was in safety there. O "turn to your strong-hold, ye prisoners of hope;" for he is "a hiding-place from the storm and a covert from the tempest." Confide in his love, his promise, his providence, his righteousness, as a man does his house where he dwells, not being afraid of cold, or storm, or tempest, when he has got in under the roof of it.

3. This trusting in Christ, our blessed Kinsman, is sometimes expressed by a *leaning:* Song viii. 5: "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" And so it alludes to a man laying his weight on a strong

staff, which he knows will not bow or break, or a man leaning upon the ground, or upon a strong rock, which he knows is fully able to bear his weight, and will not sink under him. —Thus I have endeavoured a little to clear to you the nature of that trust which I would have you to put in Christ, our blessed Kinsman and the Avenger of our blood, who comes from Edom and Bozrah, travelling in the greatness of his strength for our redemption and salvation. So much for the first question in following out this exhortation.

Quest. 2. What warrant or encouragement have I to trust him for my salvation?

Answ. 1. The near relation that he stands under to you, both by nature and office, may warrant and encourage you to trust in him. Will you not trust your Kinsman, who, in resentment of your quarrel, has avenged you upon the enemy that ruined you by bruising his head? But oh! say you, is he my Kinsman? I answer, He is; for he is "God manifested in the flesh," his name is "Immanuel, God with man, God with us;" he was made of a woman, and took part of our flesh, and by so doing has adorned our nature with a greater glory than ever it had, while it shined with all the beauties and glories with which it was adorned when it dropped out of the Creator's fingers in innocency; yea, to a greater glory than that of the angelical nature was ever advanced; for "he took not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham." And upon this ground, let us claim him as our Lord Jesus Christ, our Brother, our elder Brother; for "he is not ashamed to call us brethren." It is very remarkable, that Christ, while here in a state of humiliation, commonly gloried in that name of calling himself the Son of man, rather than that of being the Son of God. Why, what was the design of his making choice of that designation, but that he might inculcate his relation upon us as our Kinsman, by virtue of his assuming our nature, that so we might be encouraged to put our trust under the shadow of his wings? But then, sirs, consider that Christ is not only related to you by nature, but also by office, he is "the Prophet, Priest, and King" of the church; a Prophet to give wisdom to the ignorant; a Priest to justify the guilty sinner; a King to subdue the enmity of the heart, and to deliver the devil's captives; he is presented to us in the gospel under each of these relative offices, that we in a way of believing may be encouraged to trust him. O sirs, what is a Saviour for? is he not for a lost sinner? Yes, surely, he himself tells us, that this was his very errand, to "seek and save that which was lost; that he came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." What is a surety for, but for a broken bankrupt and debtor? And are not you such?

Yes, surely, you and I are broken to all intents and purposes in the first Adam, and to you he is presented in this gospel upon this design, that you may, by trusting in him, be put in a capacity to answer all the charges that either law or justice have against you. So then, I say, let the near relation he stands under to you, both by nature and office, encourage you to "put your trust under the shadow of his wings."

2. The express command of God may warrant and encourage you to trust this blessed Kinsman and relation of yours. The Father commands you by a proclamation from the excellent glory, saying, "Hear ye him, for this is my beloved Son:" hence the apostle, 1 John iii. 23, speaks of this as the sum and substance of all commands, yea, as if this were the only command of God to sinners, "This is his commandment, that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ:" now to believe in Christ, and to trust him with our salvation, is one and the same thing. How frequently is this command inculcated both in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament; and what is called *believing in Christ* in the New Testament, is called *trusting in the Lord* in the Old Testament: Is. xxvi. 4: "Trust ye the Lord for ever: for with the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength." "Trust in him at all times; ye people pour out your hearts before him: God is a refuge for us. Selah." O sirs, what can be a warrant for any duty, if not the express command and authority of the great God? Do not imagine that it is presumption in you to believe, or trust in the Lord Jesus (as before described;) no, no, a man never can be guilty of presumption in doing what God bids him do; yea, not to do it, not to obey him in this matter, is to rush upon his neck, to trample upon his authority. Do not think that it is left optional to you, whether you trust him or not; no, the law is passed, and you are concluded under its authority, and "disobedience" to it "is as the sin of witchcraft." Do not imagine there is no danger in slighting the command of God in this matter; no, it is a command fenced with the most severe penal sanction of any thing that ever God commanded the children of men: "He that believeth not, is condemned already; and the wrath of God abideth on him."

3. Let the promise annexed to believing or trusting engage you to trust your Kinsman: "He that believeth, shall be saved. Whosoever believes in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." And, therefore, if you love your life, yea, the everlasting life of your souls, incline your ears, come to your Kinsman, and intrust him with your everlasting all. This connexion established between trusting and salvation, makes an open door to every hearer of the gospel; for there is no doubt but faith is the duty of all by the command of God, otherwise unbelief could not be their sin; now seeing

the duty is to all, the promise of life connected with it must be to all likewise: so that it is true of every son of Adam, that if he believe he shall be saved. But then consider, that the promise, yea, all the promises of this glorious testament are endorsed and directed to you as a warrant and encouragement for you to trust in our blessed Kinsman: "To you is the word of this salvation sent. The promise is unto you, and to your seed, and to all that are afar off, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call." I do not think that the apostle's meaning was, that the promise was theirs in possession before they believed it; but it was theirs in the exhibition, as a letter directed to a person is his letter, because directed to him, even before it come to his hand, or before he break it up, and read the contents of it.

4. To encourage you to trust this blessed Friend, Kinsman, and Avenger, will you consider how pleasing and agreeable a thing it is to him to have poor sinners putting their trust under the shadow of his wings for safety. John vi. 29, says Christ there to a company of men who were asking to know what the works of God were, that they might do the things that pleased him. "This," says he, "is the work of God, that ye believe in him, or trust in him, whom he hath sent." As if he had said, God hath sent his Son upon an expedition to this lower world, to satisfy justice, and to take vengeance upon the devil and his works, to rescue sinners from the bondage they are under to their enemies, and there is nothing so pleasing or agreeable to him, yea, nothing can be pleasing to him, unless you believe or trust in him for salvation from sin, Satan, and wrath. O sirs, never did a mother draw forth her breast to her sucking child with greater pleasure, when they were gorged and pained with great abundance of milk, than a God of love draws forth his grace, and mercy, and love to sinners in the gospel, that they may suck by faith, and be satisfied with the abundance of his grace. How is he pained at the heart, till sinners come and suck the breast of his grace, by "putting their trust under the shadow of his wings?" "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, how often would I have gathered thee, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings!" How does he expostulate with sinners for their aversion to come to him! "Oh, my people, what have I done unto thee? wherein have I wearied thee?" As if he had said, O what ails you at me? what harm have I done you? was I ever "a barren wilderness, or a land of drought" to you?

5. To encourage our faith and trust in this glorious Kinsman, and the Avenger of our blood, will you consider, that this is to answer the end of all that ever he did or spake. Pray tell me, why did God send his only begotten Son into

the world? Why did the only begotten Son of God come into the world? Why did he assume our nature, take our place in law? Why did he bruise Satan's head? Why did he die, rise again and ascend, and "sit down at the right hand of the Majesty on high?" Why did he send forth his apostles, and other ministers, as heralds to proclaim all his glorious achievements to a lost world? What is the design of a preached gospel? Why has he given you his statutes and testimonies, opened to you "the great things" of his law and covenant, opened up the love of his heart? And why are his bowels sending out a sound to you who are running in the broad way to ruin, saying, "As I live, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but rather that they turn unto me and live?" What, I say, is the design of all this, but just that sinners may trust and rest, and believe in Christ with assured confidence, that so they "may not perish, but have everlasting life?" This is the very hinge on which all religion turns, this is the [object] we should aim at in preaching, and you in hearing, that you may be brought to trust the Avenger of our blood. Now, seeing this is the scope of the whole gospel-revelation, and of all that ever Christ did or said, does not this sufficiently warrant you to believe and trust in him?

6. Consider the hazard and danger of not trusting and believing in him. You do what in you lies to defeat the design of his whole undertaking, and the design of the whole gospel; you make God a liar in refusing to believe the record he hath given of his Son; you must continue in a confederacy with Satan against him if you do not believe, there is no midst; you lay your souls open to inevitable ruin; for "there is no name given under heaven whereby to be saved, but by the name of Jesus." You make your kind Kinsman your enemy, and draw the vengeance he designed in order to your deliverance, upon your own heads; and there is no vengeance so terrible as the vengeance of an incensed friend. O how terrible is the wrath of a slighted Saviour and Redeemer! 2 Thess. i. 8: "The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven, with his mighty angels, in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel." Consider this, ye that say now, "We will not have this man to rule over us."

7. Consider what glorious advantages shall redound to you by trusting and believing in this blessed Redeemer and Avenger. Perfect peace shall be the fruit of it, a "peace that passeth all understanding:" Is. xxvi. 3: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in thee." Joy shall spring up in your bosoms upon your trusting in him, yea, a "joy unspeakable and full of

glory;" we are "filled with joy and peace in believing." Provision and food both for soul and body: Psal. xxxvii. 3; "Trust in the Lord, and do good, so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed." Protection and safety in a time of danger; protection from Satan, that cunning fowler, and all his birds of prey: Psal. xci. 2—4: "I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge, and my fortress: my God, in him will I trust." And then it follows, "Surely he shall deliver thee from the snare of the fowler, and from the noisome pestilence. He shall cover thee with his feathers, and under his wings shalt thou trust." Firmness and stability is the fruit of trusting in him, so as not to be shaken, like the trees of the wood, with the wind of temptation or affliction: "He that trusteth in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." King Jehoshaphat advises Israel, under a shaking dispensation, "Believe in the Lord your God, so shall you be established: believe his prophets, so shall ye prosper." You shall not be afraid of evil tidings, if your hearts be fixed, trusting in the Lord. Increase and growth in grace is the fruit of trusting in him. Would you have your souls in a lively flourishing condition, "like the palm tree and the cedar in Lebanon?" Then trust your kind Kinsman and Avenger: see a sweet promise to this purpose, Jer. xvii. 7, 8: "Blessed is the man that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green, and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." But what shall I say more, everlasting life, and all that pertains to it, is the fruit of trusting in him: and "he who believeth in him shall never be confounded" of his hope and expectation. Thus, you see what glorious warrants and encouragements you have to trust in this glorious Kinsman, the Avenger of our blood.

Quest. 3. When is it that we should trust this kind Kinsman? What are the special seasons of this duty we owe him? *Answ.* In general, there is no time unseasonable; yea, it is seasonable at all times: "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your hearts before him." There is not a moment of your life, there is not a turn of your pilgrimage here below, in which you do not stand in need of grace and mercy from your Kinsman to help you; and therefore you need to trust him at all times: "To whom coming" by a lively trust and faith, "ye are built up a spiritual house," &c. But there are some special seasons in which we are called in a particular manner to exercise trust, faith, hope, and dependence upon him for his helping grace.

1. Under the arrests of the law as a covenant, or under the challenges of conscience supported by the law, craving the debt of obedience or punishment, according to the terms and tenor of the covenant: then we are called by faith to trust to him, and flee to him as "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth in him." O sinner, who art sinking under the debt thou owest to justice; come, put your trust in this Surety; he who bruised the head of the serpent in avenging your quarrel upon him, will be sure to stand between thee and justice; for "he brought in everlasting righteousness; he magnified the law" as a covenant; "he was made sin for us," for this very end, "that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

2. When thou art molested with a body of sin and death, I mean the workings of indwelling corruption, then trust your blessed Kinsman, that by "the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus, he may make you free from the law of sin and death." He is "made of God unto us sanctification;" and "our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destsoyed, that henceforth we might not serve sin." Atheism, enmity, unbelief, carnality, and other heart evils under which thou art groaning, are his enemies as well as the enemies of thy soul; and therefore "he will wound the head of these his enemies;" "all his enemies shall perish, into smoke shall they consume away;" he will waste, weaken, and wither that body of sin under which thou art groaning.

3. When thou art harassed with the fiery darts of Satan, tempting thee, perhaps, to the same sins of atheism, distrust, and self-murder, unto which he had the impudence to tempt Christ himself when here upon earth; this is a season in which thou shouldst trust thy Friend, Kinsman, and Avenger. And, to encourage thee to trust him in that case, remember that the day of vengence is in his heart, his vengeance is in a peculiar manner pointed against that enemy; and therefore he will be sure to join the poor soul that is groaning under his oppression, and crying to him for relief; and besides, he stands engaged by promise, that "he will not suffer thee to be tempted above what thou art able to bear, but with the temptation will provide a way to escape. *He* stands at the right hand of the poor; *he is* the strength of the poor and needy in their distress, when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall."

4. Art thou wrapt up among the dark and thick clouds of desertion? This is a proper season of trust in thy Kinsman: Is. l. 10: "Who is he among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness

and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Faith and trust is then especially to be exercised, when sense and reason can perceive nothing but anger and frowns; for "here we walk by faith, and not by sight:" and "faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." And, to encourage thy trust in him in such a case, look to his promise, in which he has said, that "though he forsake thee for a small moment, yet he will return with everlasting kindness." "Weeping endureth for a night, but joy cometh in the morning."

5. When thou art enjoying the sweet and sensible manifestations of his love, that is a time for trusting, as well as when under desertion and hidings. Never is the believer in more danger, than when his sense is gratified with a fill of the marrow and fatness, and wine of his Father's house. Indeed, sense is sweet, yea, it is the suburbs of heaven; but, I say, the believer is never more in danger, like Paul, of being lifted up above measure, than when admitted to the greatest sensible nearness; it is hard to carry a full cup with an even hand: and therefore, I say, a time of special sensible nearness is a time proper for faith and trust in the Lord, that he may help to the right improvement of these visits of his love. And, indeed, this is one great design of all the sensible glowings of divine love, as well as of the displays that are made of it in the gospel revelation, that the sons of men may be encouraged and engaged to "put their trust under the shadow of his wings," Psal. xxxvi. 7.

6. When we are meeting with disappointments in the world, as to those things in which we were expecting satisfaction, that is a proper season for this duty of trusting in Christ your glorious Kinsman. When friends turn false and perfidious, it should teach us to trust in that "Friend that sticks closer than a brother." So did David, when father and mother forsook him, then he trusted that the Lord would take him up; so Psal. cxlii. 4, 5: "I looked on my right hand, and beheld, but there was no man that would know me; refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul. I cried unto thee, O Lord, I said, Thou art my refuge, and my portion in the land of the living." When our worldly substance is withering, and our earthly possessions taken from us, either by force or fraud, that is a proper time of trusting our kind Kinsman and Avenger: Hab. iii. 17, 18: "Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines, the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat, the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Sirs, God on purpose breaks our earthly comforts and

cisterns in pieces, that by faith we may be brought to solace ourselves in him alone as an upmaking heritage for ever, saying with David, "My flesh and my heart faileth: but God is the strength of my heart and my portion for ever." Job, when he is swept naked of all he had in the world, cries out confidently, "I know that my Redeemer liveth:" and "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." I might tell you of many other seasons of trusting in the Lord Jesus; but I prevented myself as to this in the use of consolation, and therefore shall not stay upon this head at present.

Thus have I endeavoured to give you some account of the nature of this trust in the Lord Jesus to which I call you; I have given you some warrants and encouragements to it, and told you of some seasons when more especially this trust is to be exercised; I shall close this exhortation, by offering you a few helps to it, and I name only the few following:—

1. Be persuaded of the ruin and misery you have brought upon yourselves by sin; how you are enslaved to Satan, laid open to the curse of the law, and the wrath of God, and every moment in danger of eternal damnation. Till persons are convinced and awakened, they never in good earnest fly to the Redeemer, and the hope that is set before them.

2. Be persuaded of your Kinsman's good-will toward your relief; believe his oath, Ezek. xxxiii. 11: "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live." We will never trust a man unless we be persuaded of his good-will toward us. Now, sirs, will you but consider what has been said of Christ in the doctrinal part, how he spent his own blood and life in avenging your quarrel, and see if you can doubt of his good will to men upon their trusting in him?

3. Be persuaded of his ability to undertake your business. Although we be persuaded of a man's kindness, yet if he be weak and impotent, his weakness and inability weakens our trust, confidence, and expectation of relief from him. But, now, our blessed Avenger, is none other than "the mighty God, able to save to the uttermost, all that come unto God through him."

4. Be persuaded of his veracity and faithfulness in his promise of help; for if we have a jealousy of a man's faithfulness and honesty, it breaks our trust in him. Now, thy Kinsman, believer, is "the Amen, the faithful and true witness;" "faithfulness is the girdle of his loins, and truth is the girdle of his reins." And his faithfulness appears in these things, he thinks before he speaks, all his promises are the results of his eternal purpose, his promise is the very picture of his thoughts, he does not think one thing and say another: he

cannot forget his promise; no, he is ever mindful of his covenant; and therefore it is false that he hath forgotten to be gracious, as he promised: he cannot alter his mind as men do; they grant securities and then recall them, because they change their minds; but not so here, he never yet broke his word; he is always better than his word, but never broke it. By being fully persuaded of these things, you shall be brought to an unshaken confidence, so as to believe without staggering, like Abraham the father of the faithful. So much for the *second* exhortation.

THE ANNALS OF REDEEMING LOVE, WITH THE REDEEMER'S VENGEANCE UPON THE GRAND ENEMY OF THE REDEEMED.

For the day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.—Is. LXIII, 4.

THE SIXTH SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

My *third* exhortation from this branch of the doctrine is this: Is it so that Christ our glorious Kinsman has avenged our quarrel upon Satan and his auxiliaries? O then be exhorted to marry your blessed Kinsman, that has been so kind to us as to take an expedition against the powers of hell in order to our redemption. O sirs, when Christ the glorious Messiah looked down from heaven, and saw us betrayed to everlasting ruin by Satan, that grand Abaddon and Apollyon; when he saw us "in covenant with hell, and at an agreement with death," lying "under the curse of the law," and in the adulterous embraces of our lusts, his spirit within him warmed, and stirred with resentment against the enemy that betrayed us, he presently comes down and examines the matter; he convenes the old serpent before him, and dooms him to destruction, saying, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." As if he had said, O Satan, I will be avenged on thee for the injury thou hast done to the woman and her seed; I will take on the nature of man, and in his nature I will be thy ruin and destruction, and of all thy works. And, accordingly, in the fulness of time he comes with his

heart fraught with love to us, and vengeance against principalities and powers, spoils them on his cross; and, after all, having done the part of a kind Kinsman and Redeemer, he issues forth a proclamation and purpose of marriage, saying as it is, Hos. ii. 19, 20: "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord. O sirs, I come to you as a friend of the great Bridegroom, to court your consent to the blessed bargain; your Kinsman and Avenger of your blood, he is willing and desirous to come under a conjugal relation to you; and therefore, O say the word, and say it with your hearts and tongues, "I am the Lord's: I am his, and he is mine: This is my beloved, and this is my Friend and Kinsman, O daughters of Jerusalem."

Now, because we must deal with you as rational agents; therefore I will offer you some considerations to gain your consent to marry our blessed Kinsman.

Motive 1. Consider that it was for this end that he became our Kinsman, and took on our nature, that he might come under a nearer relation to us, even to betroth us to himself in the relation of a spouse and bride. Under the law, the Jews were bound to marry one of their own tribe; so the Son of God, that he might wed so with us, became of the same tribe and family with us, took upon him the seed of Abraham, and not the nature of angels. The distance between the divine and human nature was so great, that there could be no marriage-relation between God and man till the distance be removed, and the two natures be brought into a nearer union one with another. Well, to make way for this, the divine and human natures are joined in personal union, God is manifested in the flesh: so that if you do not marry your Kinsman and Redeemer, you do what you can to defeat the design of his incarnation, and do your worst to baffle that glorious plot, the very master-piece of Infinite Wisdom and Love. O let the consideration of his stupendous condescension in becoming of our tribe, nature, and family, win your consent to him.

Mot. 2. Take a view of our Kinsman's greatness and excellency. What shall I say of him? Words fail us, yea, thought and imagination fail us, when we begin either to think or speak of his excellency, who is a courtier of your affections. We would not know how to speak a word about him, if he had not by his Spirit in his word furnished us with proper expressions of his glory. And, indeed, the words by which our ideas of him are to be formed, are such as raise our finite

minds to ecstasy, when viewed in a way of believing. O who is he, or what is he? "Who can declare his generation?" His very name is so great and glorious, that no man can frame to pronounce it aright but by the Holy Spirit. O sirs, will you refuse to be married to your Maker and Redeemer, whose name is, "The Lord of hosts, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of peace," "The brightness of the Father's glory," "The bright and morning Star," in whose presence all the stars of created glory, whether in heaven or in earth, hide their heads and disappear, as if they were ashamed to be seen beside him? Your Kinsman, who waits for your consent, for beauty is so excellent, that he is "fairer than the children of men, his countenance is like Lebanon, and as the sun shining in his strength." For wisdom he is so eminent, that he is "the wisdom of God in a mystery, and all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him." For strength, he is "the man of God's right hand; whom he made strong for himself" he is "the power of God," as well as "the wisdom of God;" his arm brings salvation to sinners in the room of the powers of hell. For birth and pedigree, he is God's "first-born, made higher than the kings of the earth;" he is, as to his divine nature, "the only begotten of the Father," the only representative of his Father's family, and all the glory of his Father's house hangs upon him; and, as to his human nature, you will see from his genealogy, Matth. i., that he is "the offspring of ancient kings," of the royal family of David. For honour, he is equally honourable with the Father, and he "thinks it no robbery to be equal with God;" he is the honourable "head of all principality and power, might and dominion, and of every name that" can be "named, whether in this world, or that which is to come." For riches, he is "the heir of all things;" the riches of Solomon were but chaff and dross in comparison of that "gold tried in the fire," that he will bestow in abundance upon his bride. For constancy in love, he "rests in his love, and changes not;" his name is I AM, "without any variableness or shadow of turning." For life, he is *immortal:* other husbands die, and leave their wives melancholy widows; but O sirs, your Kinsman lives for ever: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." It is true, he was once dead, and buried; but being the Lord of life and death, it was not possible that the bars of the grave could detain him: no, no, though he "was dead, yet now he is alive, and lives for evermore." Death shall never break the marriage-knot between him and you; for he conveys immortality and life to his bride that moment she gives her consent to him: "He that be-

lieveth in the Son of God, hath everlasting life." Thus, you see what a glorious, honourable, and excellent person our Kinsman, the Avenger of our blood, is, who offers to be married to you. O sirs, who would not match with him, who would not reckon it their greatest honour to be brought under a marriage-relation to him?

Mot. 3. To encourage your consent to marry your Kinsman, the Avenger of your blood, consider what he will do for you, and to you, if you will marry him; he will "restore to you what he took not away," and will do that for you which the law could not do, and which the whole world of angels and men could not but do, but himself only.

1*st*, He will restore the beautiful image of God upon you which was defaced through the contagious poison of the old serpent. Thou art become black like hell by lying among the devil's pots, of an Ethiopian hue; but if thou wilt marry thy Kinsman, he will make you beautiful through his own comeliness, the beauty of the Lord thy God will be put upon thee, so that thou shalt be like the wings of a dove, covered with silver, and thy feathers with yellow gold."

2*dly*, If thou wilt marry thy Kinsman and Avenger, O sinner, he will restore thy title to the lost and mortgaged inheritance. Thou lost thy title that moment thy father Adam eat of the forbidden fruit, and by his sin thou art become an heir of hell and wrath; but by consenting to this better Husband, thy claim and title to the inheritance shall be set upon a better footing than it was at first; for thou shalt be "an heir of God, and a joint heir with Jesus Christ." You know the wife by marriage is interested in her husband's estate; so here.

3*dly*, As the foundation of thy title to the inheritance, he will restore to thee a perfect law of righteousness, by which thou shalt be put in case to look all accusers and accusations in the face. Thou lost thy righteousness in the first Adam, but in Christ, thy Kinsman, thou comest to be clothed with the righteousness of God. Adam's righteousness was his clothing and ornament, and so soon as ever he lost it, he and all his posterity became naked; but thy Kinsman will array thee "with the garments of salvation, and with the robes of righteousness;" Christ gives his bride her marriage-robe, she has not a rag of her own to cover her nakedness.

4*thly*, Marry thy Kinsman, and he will clear all thy debts thou owest to the law and justice of God; for the power of pardon is in his hand: "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins."

5*thly*, He will heal all thy diseases and wounds. Thou art naturally "lying in thy blood," like the man that fell into his

enemies' hands between Jerusalem and Jericho; but if thou wilt take thy Kinsman for thy husband, he will heal all thy diseases; for his name is JEHOVAH ROPHI, and at length he will present thee to his Father "without spot, wrinkle, or any such thing."

6*thly*, Marry thy Kinsman, and he will manage all thy concerns for thee, whether in heaven above, or in the earth beneath. Hast thou any business at the high court above? Thy Kinsman will manage that; for he is "our Advocate with the Father." Hast thou any affairs on earth with which thou art perplexed and entangled? Thy Kinsman will manage these also for thee; for he has said, that "all things shall work together for good, to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose;" and he bids his spouse cast all her care upon him.

7*thly*, Marry your Kinsman, and he will provide you a large jointure. Although the spouse of Christ contract nothing with him but debt, yet such is his liberal love to her, that he provides her in a whole kingdom: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." He provides her in a jointure-house, where he and she shall dwell for ever: "I go to prepare a place for you: In my Father's house are many mansions." In a word, he makes over himself and his whole fulness, which is more than heaven and earth, and the fulness of both. O shall not all this prevail with you to join hands with your Kinsman, the Avenger of your blood.

Mot. 4. By way of motive, will you consider that the purpose of marriage, on the part of this glorious Kinsman, is intimated and proclaimed. We who are ministers, as friends of the Bridegroom, proclaim it as with sound of trumpet upon the house-tops, in the tops of the high places of Zion. Be it known to all men, that the Son of God, the Prince of life, the Lord of glory, is content to be wedded and married to every one of the posterity of Adam, that has a mind to join hands with him. O sirs, will you counteract the marriage after proclamation?

Mot. 5. Consider, that the contract is drawn, I mean the contract of the new and better covenant; yea more, the Bridegroom of souls, the kind Immanuel, he has in his own and his Father's name signed the contract with his precious blood, for his blood is *the blood of the covenant;* and by the shedding of his blood, he has "confirmed the covenant with many;" yea, he has superadded his oath, that you might have "two immutable things" to build your faith upon. And, moreover, the contract of marriage is already attested by the "three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word,

and the Spirit," who all give their joint testimony to the bargain.

Mot. 6. Consider, that this contract of the new covenant of grace and promise is endorsed to you, to let you know, it is no vicious intromission for you to put your hand to it in a way of believing: "To you is the word of this salvation sent: The promise is unto you, and to your seed, and to all that are afar off." The promise is left to you, and we that are ministers are sent to open the contents of it; to tell you of its freedom, of its fulness, of its comely order and stability, and to lay it in broad band before you, requiring you to subscribe with the hand of faith, saying, "I am the Lord's."

Mot. 7. Consider, that you have so far given your consent already to this glorious Kinsman, that he should be your Husband, and you his spouse and bride, that you cannot retract without perjury and adultery. When a woman has given her hand to a man before witnesses, and said with her mouth, that she takes such a man for her husband, promising to be faithful to him unto death; we reckon that woman married in the sight of the world; and it is not lawful for her to dispose of herself to another man, without being guilty of perjury in breaking the marriage-oath; and if she join herself to another, she is an adulteress. Well, sirs, thus far is the bargain gone between Christ and every one of you (I pray you consider it, for this is a matter of the greatest moment,) you are already married to Christ. You have consented to be his, and not another's, in baptism, you was then dedicated and devoted to him; and have you not many times made open profession of the name of Christ? Do you not all own him as your Saviour, as your "Prophet, Priest, and King," before the world? Have you not been at a communion-table? Are you not called Christians after him, as a woman is called by the name of her husband? Well, do not all these make marriage between him and you? Are you after all this at liberty to follow other lords and lovers? I own indeed, that many, many multitudes in the visible church, go all these lengths, who yet are never married to him in their hearts, and who are joined to their idols inwardly. But whether you said it with your hearts or not, you have before the world professed, that he, and he only, shall be your Lord, and that "other lords shall not have dominion over" you; and if your heart did not go along with your profession, you are rank hypocrites. But your professed consent makes marriage before the world, so that you stand bound by the oath of God, to be for him and not for another; and if you go after other lovers, and prostitute your souls to them, you play the harlot, as the Lord says to Israel, Jer. iii. 1. And

we find this professed and declared consent to Christ, is called marriage with the Lord in scripture, Jer. iii. 14; and urged by the Lord as an argument for their return to him; "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married unto you."—And upon this ground, their idolatry and other sins fall under the charge of spiritual fornication and adultery, ver. 2: "Thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms, and with thy wickedness." Thus you see, that there is already a marriage-relation between Christ and you, and you cannot retract without whoredom and adultery. And, seeing you have already signed the contract of the covenant professedly before the world, why will you not sign it with your heart also, by which a man "believeth unto righteousness?" If you do not, you deal deceitfully with God, and "cursed is the man that doth the work of the Lord deceitfully."

Mot. 8. Consider how mightily the heart of our glorious Kinsman, and Avenger of blood, is set upon a match between you. So much was his heart set upon it, that the very thoughts of it were matter of rejoicing to him before the world was made; he "rejoiced from eternity in the habitable parts of the earth," that is, in these parts of the earth where he saw he would get a bride to himself among the posterity of Adam. His heart was so much upon this match, that he came, "travelling in the greatness of his strength," in order to rescue and deliver his bride; when he saw her lying with the chains of hell upon her, he flees, as upon *the wings of the wind*, for her relief, crying, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart, and the year of my redeemed is come.* So much is his heart set upon this match, that he is the most earnest suitor to you that ever was; he invites, he beseeches, he entreats, and obtests sinners to give the consent of the heart, as well as the mouth; and when sinners refuse to give the consent of their hearts to him as their Husband, his very heart is like to burst within him: "My bowels are turned within me, and my repentings are kindled together."

Mot. 9. This is all the reward that he seeks of you for his hard and sore travail, in spending the blood of his heart for the satisfying of justice, and in avenging your quarrel upon the powers of hell, namely, that you give the consent of your souls to be his, and not another's. O let him *see the travail of his soul*, that he may *be satisfied.*

Mot. 10. All parties are pleased, if you be but content. Our Kinsman's Father is pleased; he first proposed the match to his own Son, in "the council of peace;" and he also proposes it to us in the word; he sends forth his servants, inviting all to the marriage-supper of the King's Son, saying, "Behold, I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fat-

lings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage:" so that God the Father is pleased with the match. Our Kinsman Christ, the glorious Messiah, is pleased, and so well pleased, that, when a sinner gives his consent to marry him, he reckons it his coronation-day, and "the day of the gladness of his heart," Cant. iii. 11: The friends of the Bridegroom are pleased, all faithful ministers are pleased, for they travail in birth till you consent to marry this creditable Kinsman of ours. Fellow virgins, all true believers are pleased, and rejoice when Christ gets a new bride. In a word, the whole family of the church militant and triumphant rejoice when a sinner is betrothed unto the Son of God. Now, seeing all parties concerned are pleased with the bargain, shall there be any more hinderance in it?

Here we stand ready, in his name, to answer all imaginable objections that unbelief may offer against your marrying the Avenger of your blood.

Object. 1. The distance is so great between him and me, that I cannot think he will ever look on me; I am unworthy of any body's notice, much more of his, who is "the Prince of the kings of the earth." *Answ.* Since he does not stand upon the inequality of the match, do not you make an objection of it; for the odds lie on his side. Again, the greater the inequality be, the more is the glory of free grace manifested, and that is his plot, that grace may reign, and not merit. And then remember it is God's ordinary way, to pass by the great, rich, honourable, and to pitch upon the base, foolish, things of the world, "that no flesh may glory in his presence."

Object. 2. I am black and ugly, and deformed, will he ever join hands with me, whose "countenance is as Lebanon?" *Answ.* He never took any of Adam's race to him in such a relation because they were beautiful, but because he designed to make them beautiful "through his comeliness." But, oh! my sins are of a deep dye. *Answ.* This shall be no stop, Is. i. 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool."

Object. 3. I am a dead sinner, will ever the Lord of life match with me? *Answ.* Hear himself answering the objection, Is. lv. 3: "Hear, and your soul shall live." Give thy consent to him by faith, and though thou wert dead, yet shalt thou live.

Object. 4. I do not know if ever the Bridegroom loved me, or designed that I should be his bride. *Answ.* If a man should propose and promise marriage to a woman, and she

should refuse her consent, under a pretence that she did not know the design of his heart, would not this be to charge her [lover] with disingenuousness? So here the case is the same; we are to judge of the Lord's heart and designs by the words of his mouth; and faith holds him by his word and at his word.

Object. 5. I want a will to give my consent to him. *Answ.* Put thy will in his hand, and he promises to make thee "willing in a day of his power." And if the enmity and aversion of thy will be really thy exercise, it is an evidence that the rooted consent of thy heart is already gained; for I never desired a greater evidence of true love to Christ, than to be groaning under the enmity of the heart against him: so it is a sign that the will is really bowed to him, where the remaining corrupt will is the soul's burden and exercise.

Now, I shall conclude this exhortation with a few advices; if you, indeed, have a mind for this match with our Goel, our glorious Kinsman, who has avenged our quarrel upon hell, sin, and death. And, for your direction, I recommend the practice of Ruth, or her carriage till the accomplishment of her marriage with Boaz, her kinsman or redeemer; for in the Hebrew language the same word signifies both a *kinsman* and *redeemer*, as you will see by noticing the margin of your Bibles, Ruth iv. 14. Now, I say, observe Ruth's management in this matter, and follow her example; for "these things are written for our learning."

1. You will find, that Ruth clave fast to her mother Naomi, and showed great kindness to her; so that she would by no means part with her, when returning to her own country, to "dwell under the wings of the God of Israel." We are told, that Orpah "kissed her mother-in-law," and then left her, returning again to her own people in the land of Moab, but Ruth would by no means part with her, Ruth i. 16, 17. So my advice to you is, to cleave to your mother, the church, in her returning to the Lord God of Israel. I do not advise you to cleave to our mother in her backslidings from the Lord, but cleave to her in so far as she returns to the Lord God of Israel, to dwell under his shadow. If Ruth had left her mother Naomi, as Orpah did, she had never been married to her kinsman Boaz; she had been quite out of the way to it: so my advice to you, in order to a marriage with Christ, your blessed kinsman, is to cleave to your mother church, the church of Christ, in her returning to the Lord, and do her all the kindness that you can. Boaz took it kindly that Ruth had dealt with her mother-in-law, and showed her kindness in a strange land, and came along with her to the land of Israel: so Christ takes it kindly when any show kindness to

his church, and cleave to her when in a strange land, or among the midst of enemies. Say with the psalmest, Psal. cxxxvii. 5, 6: "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth; if I prefer not Jerusalem above my chief joy." Study to keep by the poor church of Christ, especially in her returning to the Lord. I confess there are many things wrong in the church at this day, but yet we must not leave her for that; we must not, like Orpah, kiss her, and bid her adieu; no, we must cleave to our mother, and yet separate ourselves from her defects, by giving due testimony against what is wrong about her.

2. Ruth, you will find, according to the advice of her mother Naomi, went and gleaned in the field of Boaz, her kinsman; and she was discharged by Boaz, as well as her mother, from going to glean in another man's field. Do you the like, glean the field of our blessed Kinsman, Jesus Christ, and keep by his reapers, I mean the faithful ministers of Christ; this is the advice given to the spouse, Cant. i. 7, 8: "If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids among the shepherds' tents. Why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?" Do not turn aside to the fields of strangers, deceivers, erroneous teachers, hirelings, who have the sheep's clothing, but "inwardly are ravening wolves." Keep by Christ's green pasture, his field; for there you may expect to have something dropped for your encouragement, by the order of the great Master of the field; as Boaz ordered his reapers to let handfuls fall to Ruth, when she kept by his field; so if you keep by the pure field of the preaching of the word and ordinances, as he has commanded them to be dispensed, you may expect that our kind kinsman will let something fall for your encouragement.

3. Ruth improved every hint of Boaz's kindness and goodwill, to cleave to him as her kinsman; and the more that she observed his kindness, the more she was encouraged. So I would have you to encourage faith and trust in our Goel and Kinsman, from every hint of his good-will and kindness manifested in his word. Do as the servants of Benhadad did, who catched at every favourable word that dropped from the mouth of the king of Israel. Gather up the sheaves, or the handfuls that he orders his reapers to let fall to you; and when he bids you come at meal-time, and eat of his bread, and dip your morsel in his vinegar, or wine, be sure to do his bidding, and take it as a token of his kindness; for his heart is full of love, being love itself.

4. We are told, that Ruth crept down at her kinsman's feet,

chap. iii. 7; and under his covering, being encouraged to it by the relation he bore her, as a kinsman, by the kindly words and acts that he had showed her. So my advice to you is, to lie down at the feet of our kind Kinsman, and creep under the covering of his righteousness; for he is "clothed with a garment down to his foot;" and encourage yourselves to do so, from the kindness that he shows by his words and acts. O what kindness has he showed in his word! "He that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out: Whosoever will, let him come, and take the water of life freely." O what kindly invitations doth he give to "come and eat of his bread, and drink of the wine that he hath mingled!" O what kindness appears in his acts, particularly in becoming "bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh," "laying down his life a ransom for many," in "spoiling principalities and powers, and making a show of them openly, triumphing over them in his cross!" Now, let all this encourage you to creep near him, and to creep under the covering of his law-fulfilling righteousness, and say to our Goel, as Ruth did to Boaz, chap. iii. 9, "Spread thy skirt over me, for thou art a near kinsman," or, as in the margin, "one that hath right to redeem." O sirs, our blessed Boaz will be so far from taking this in ill part, that he will say to you, as Boaz did to Ruth, chap. iii. 10, 11. And, if you do this, our Kinsman will not rest, till he have finished the thing, according to your heart's desire, chap. iii. *last*. And, accordingly, you find he finishes the redemption and marriage together in the last chapter.

I proceed now to the *fourth* branch of exhortation, from this second branch of the doctrine. Is it so, that Christ, our glorious Kinsman and Redeemer, has avenged our quarrel upon the powers of hell? Did he, in the resentment of our quarrel, invade Satan's kingdom, counteract his project for our ruin, destroy his first-born, wrest the keys of hell and death out of his hand, make him a prisoner of war, and load him with chains of darkness, &c.? I say, has he thus avenged our quarrel upon our enemies? O then, let us have common friends and enemies with our glorious Kinsman, saying with David, Psal. cxxxix. 21, 22, "Do not I hate them that hate thee? and am not I grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with perfect hatred: I count them mine enemies." O sirs, you and I are called Christians, after our blessed Kinsman Christ; our very name [denotes] that we are listed under his banner, engaged in the same quarrel with him, against Satan and all his auxiliaries; and, therefore, let our resentment point the same way with Christ's, when he said, *The day of vengeance is in mine heart*. Christ's resentment ran against Satan, not as a creature, but as a sinner, as

a criminal. It was the ruin of sin that Christ intended. This is the great pillar of Satan's kingdom in the world, it is his main and only bulwark, his "first-born, and the beginning of his strength." Christ well knew, that if once this were cut off and destroyed, Satan's kingdom in the world would fall like lightning; and therefore we find it so frequently asserted, that this was the main and principal end of his manifestation in the flesh, and of his manifestation in the word and Spirit: "For this purpose," says the apostle John, the Son "was manifested to take away sin," 1 John iii. 5, he came to "save his people from their sins: For this purpose was the Son of God manifested; to destroy the works of the devil," that is, sin and death. Yea, his very name was called "Jesus, because he saves his people from their sins." Now, I say, was the vengeance of a Redeemer thus [directed] against this first-born of Satan, in order to our redemption? O then, let me call and invite all that profess the name of Christ, or who have his name called upon them, to come forth "to the help of the Lord against the mighty;" join hands with the Son of God, in helping to pull down the works of the devil in the world. As Christ spent his blood "to finish transgression, and to make an end of sin;" so let us even "resist unto blood, striving against it." This is what our glorious Kinsman and Avenger frequently calls us to in his word; and, to arm us with the greater resentment against sin, he calls us to make war against sin, by a word borrowed from the kind of death that he suffered in avenging our quarrel, namely, that of crucifixion. He calls us to "crucify the flesh, with the affections and lusts." "I am crucified with Christ," says Paul. The Spirit of God, no doubt, for holy ends, makes use of such an expression, particularly, that, by presenting the death and cross of Christ to our view, the remembrance of his death for our sins, might make us breathe after nothing less than the death and ruin of sin in our souls: and therefore I say, "Mortify the deeds of the body" of sin, and let nothing less than the total extirpation of it content you.

SERMON XXXI.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ZION'S KING.*

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.—PSAL. II. 6.

THE FIRST SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

IN the first three verses of this psalm, we have an account of the strong opposition that is made to the kingdom and government of the Messiah. One would have thought, that when he came into the world, every knee would have bowed to him, crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David;" and that all the sceptres of the earth would have laid at his feet; but never was any government so much opposed. For, (1.) We are here told, that hell and earth take the alarm when he appears upon the stage: "The heathen rage," &c. (2.) The opposition they make is here described; it is spiteful and malicious; for they *rage* and gnash their teeth at him, filled with indignation against him, Luke xiii. 14; John xi. 47; Acts v. 17, 33; and xix. 28, &c. It is deliberate; they *take counsel* &c. It is resolute; they "set themselves against the Lord," "set their faces like flint," and make themselves a "brow of brass." It is joint opposition; they *combine*. (3.) What they aim at by this opposition to Christ; they are children of Belial, that cannot endure the yoke, they *cast away his cords*, his commandments, his laws; these are what they resolve to break through. (4.) See how all these designs are baffled with the greatest ease, ver. 4, 5. (5.) Notice the stability of Christ's kingdom, notwithstanding of all these attempts of hell,

* The substance of several sermons, on Psal. ii. 6;—the first preached at Perth before the Associate Presbytery, Thursday, October 13, 1737, and enlarged upon at Stirling, for some Sabbaths afterwards.

The following discourses were taken from the author's notes, which he never intended, at writing, for the public, but only for the help of his own memory, and were enlarged in the delivery, as the Lord was pleased to assist. Several discourses, particularly in the applicatory part, were omitted in the transcribing, to prevent their being too voluminous and large. Nothing but the clamours of enemies, and the importunity of friends, particularly with relation to the first sermon at Perth, has made the author yield to the publication. And he judged that the first discourse, without any more, would have been too lame upon such a subject. No tongue, no pen, can handle it according to its worth. "Who is sufficient for these things?"

in the words of my text, *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.*

Where we may notice,

1. The royal office and character of our glorious Redeemer; he is a *King;* this name he has "on his vesture, and on his thigh," Rev. xix. 16.

2. The authority by which he reigns; He is *my King*, says God the Father, and I have set him up from everlasting: "The Father judgeth no man; but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." The world disowns his authority, but I own it; I have set him, I have "given him to be head over all things to the church."

3. His particular kingdom over which he rules; it is *over my holy hill of Zion*, an eminent type of the gospel-church. The temple was built upon mount Zion; and therefore called a *holy hill.* Christ's throne is in his church, it is his head-quarters, and the place of his particular residence; "The Lord hath chosen Zion, he hath desired it for his habitation. His laws go out of Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. There are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David."

4. Notice the firmness of the divine purpose with respect to this matter; *Yet have I set* him *King.* As if he had said, Whatever be the plots of hell and earth to the contrary, he reigns by his Father's ordination.

OBSERVE, That Christ is King in Zion, the alone Sovereign of his church, by his Father's appointment and ordination, *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.*

In discoursing on this doctrine, I shall endeavour, through divine assistance,

I. To speak a little of this sovereign Prince.

II. Of the kingdom which he governs.

III. Why God the Father hath appointed and ordained him King in Zion.

IV. Apply.

I. As to the *first*, I shall endeavour, 1. To prove that Christ is a Prince of royal authority. 2. Give some of his excellent qualities and properties, to recommend him to all.

As to the *first*, his sovereignty and royal authority appears,

1. From scripture prophecy; Gen. xlix. 10: "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." Luke i. 32, 33: "The Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David. And he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever, and of his king-

dom there shall be no end." Mic. v. 2: "The Ruler of Israel, whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

2. From scripture-types. David, Solomon, and others of the kings of Judah, who were active in building and repairing the temple and worship of it, all typified him in his royal office; and though the royal family of David be extinct on earth, yet it is perpetuated in him for ever in heaven.

3. From scripture-titles that are ascribed to him: "Messiah the Prince," Dan. ix. 25. "The Prince of peace," Is. ix. 6. "The Prince of the kings of the earth. The king of kings, and Lord of lords," &c.

4. From the concurring testimony of enemies and strangers. The wise men of the east, when they come in quest of him, they inquire, "Where is he that is born King of the Jews?" And it was not without the hand and counsel of God, that Pilate was directed, to the disgusting of the Jews, whom he had, contrary to his light and conscience, gratified with the blood of Christ, to affix that title to his cross, in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." Balaam, Numb. xxiv. 17: "A star shall arise out of Jacob, and a sceptre out of Israel, that shall smite the corners of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth."

5. From the badges of sovereignty every where ascribed to him.

We read in scripture, 1*st*. Of his solemn investiture with the government; his mounting the throne, when he ascended up on high. See the solemnity of his instalment, spoken of, Psal. xlvii. 5: "God is gone up with a shout, the Lord with the sound of a trumpet," &c.

2*dly*. We read of his throne, Psal. xlv. 6: "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever;" and his throne is "high and lifted up," Is. vi. 1. The very same throne upon which his Father sits, Rev. iii. 21; "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me upon my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my father upon his throne.

3*dly*. We read of his coronation, and that both by his Father, and the church, called his mother. You read of his Father's crowning him with glory, Heb. ii. 7: "Thou madest him a little lower than the angels; thou crownest him with glory and honour, and didst set him over the works of thy hands." And you read of the church, his mother, crowning him, Cant. iii. 11: "Go forth, O ye daughters of Jerusalem, and behold king Solomon with the crown wherewith his mother crowned him in the day of his espousals, and in the day of the gladness of his heart," &c.

4*thly*. We read of his royal sceptre, the rod of his

strength, which is also a rod of iron, to govern his subjects, and to dash his enemies in pieces.

5*thly.* We read of the laws issued out by his authority from Zion, and for Zion, for the government of his subjects. It was he that gave forth the law of commandments from mount Sinai, and it is he that gives forth the law of faith from mount Zion, Is. ii. 3: "The law shall go forth from Zion, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."

6*thly.* We read of courts, both for worship and discipline, held in his name; speaking of Zion, or the church, it is said, "There are the thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David." In the church are courts for worship, where his subjects attend him, both for hearing his voice in his word, and for paying the rent of worship and adoration they owe him. And then for courts of judgment or government, we see a synod held in his name, Acts xv.; and "wherever two or three" of his officers "meet in his name," for exercising the keys of doctrine or discipline, he promises to be in "the midst of them."

7*thly.* We read of the officers of his kingdom, such as apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers, elders and deacons. And the apostle, speaking of ministers of the gospel, calls them "ambassadors of Christ," 2 Cor. v. 20. Every faithful minister has commission from Christ, as King in Zion; although, alas! many who pretend to carry his commission now-a-days, are changing their holding.

8*thly.* We read of the keys of the kingdom. Christs says to his apostles and ministers, "Unto you I give the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." By the keys we are to understand the doctrine and discipline of his appointment.

9*thly.* The power of peace and war, of life and death, are in his hand. He casts out the white flag of peace to his enemies in the gospel. We preach the gospel of peace, publish the word of reconciliation, "That God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." And if peace be not accepted, in his name we denounce war against sinners that do not believe in him: "He will wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of him that goeth on in his trespasses." "He that believeth not, is condemned already; and the wrath of God abideth on him."

10*thly.* He is constituted the sovereign Judge of heaven and earth, of men and angels. The legislative and executive power is in his hand, "the keys of hell and death;" and it is left solely in his hand, for "the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." From all these things it appears, that Christ is a sovereign King, a Prince of royal authority.

Secondly. I would give you a view of the excellent qualities of Zion's King, and let them serve as so many motives to strangers to submit to his authority, and as so many cordials to his friends and loyal subjects, in this dark and cloudy day.

1. Then, He is a very ancient King. He is indeed "the Ancient of days:" he is no upstart; his throne was "set up from everlasting;" none can compete with him for antiquity, "The everlasting Father; Ruler in Israel, whose goings forth were of old, from everlasting."

2. He is a King of incomparable wisdom: "A" wiser "than Solomon is here." Solomon's wisdom was but folly compared with his; for "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge."

3. A King of irresistible power, and absolute authority: "All power in heaven and earth are his." He is "the man of God's right hand;" the arm of JEHOVAH is in him: he hath "a name above every name, and at his name every knee shall bow," &c.

4. He is a King of unspotted holiness and purity. "The holy One of Israel is our King; of purer eyes than that he can behold iniquity." His name is a holy name. His throne is a holy throne; he "sits upon the throne of his holiness." His laws are holy laws; "The law is holy; and the commandment holy, and just, and good." His covenant with his subjects is a holy covenant; "he hath commanded his holy covenant." The officers that bear the vessels of his house are, and should be holy.

5. He is a righteous King. "Justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne.—Behold a King shall reign in righteousness," Is. xxxii. 1. We have an account of the equity of his administration, Is. xi. 1—3, &c.; Psal. xlv. 7; "He loveth righteousness, and hateth iniquity," &c.

6. He is a gracious King. His name is "the Lord, gracious and merciful." He is said to be "full of grace;" and grace comes by him, and rivers of grace run from his throne, Rev. xxii. 1; Psal. xlvi. 4: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." The throne on which he sits is a throne of grace, and acts of grace are emitted from his throne, even the "great and precious promises," which are the edicts of the King, or beneficial laws issued out for the benefit of the subject.

7. He is a most merciful and compassionate King. He has bowels of compassion towards his enemies; he would have gathered his enemies in Jerusalem, "as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings;" and when his enemies prove obstinate, he "weeps over them," &c. He is loath, at his very

heart, to give up with a people that are giving up with him, Hos. xi. 8: "How shall I give thee up, O Ephraim?" &c.

8. O wonderful sympathy with his subjects! He is "touched with the feeling of our infirmities:" he reckons any favour or injury done to them, as done to himself, Matth. xxv., at the close.

9. A King of immense riches, and unbounded liberality and bounty. "His riches are unsearchable:" "Riches and honour are with him." And as for his bounty, he distributes his grace as freely as the sun scatters his beams through the earth. He invites all the world to come and share of his fulness, Is. lv. 1: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters," &c. Prov. ix. at the beginning.

10. He is a King of untainted veracity and truth. One may depend upon his royal word, "He is not a man that he should lie, neither the Son of man that he should repent." His name is "Truth, the Word of God." One may venture his salvation with safety, on his word, for he never failed; "all the promises of God are in him yea and amen." He has sealed them with his blood, and sets to his royal amen, as "the faithful and true witness," to every one of them.

11. He is an immortal King. Other kings "die like men, they fall like the sons of the mighty;" death brings them out of their high seats, and puts them upon a level with the beggar; but the king of Zion "lives for ever and ever." It is true, he was once dead; but being "the Prince of life," it was not possible that death, the king of terrors, could detain him in his territories, Rev. i. 18: "I was dead, but am alive," &c. And the life of all his subjects is bound up in his life.

12. He is at present an invisible King, out of the sight of our bodily eyes. He has gone within the veil, "to appear in the presence of God for us;" he pleads the cause of all his subjects in the highest heavens. But still he is visible to the eye of faith; "Whom, having not seen, we love." And, in a little [time,] he will be visible to every eye, Rev. i. 7: "Behold, he cometh with clouds; and every eye shall see him."

13. He is an eternal King: "The King eternal." As his kingdom is "from everlasting," so it is "to everlasting;" "and of the increase of his kingdom and government there shall be no end."

14. He is an independent King. All the powers of the earth depend on him: "By me kings reign, and princes decree justice;" but he depends upon none. It is true his mediatory kingdom is committed to him by his Father, but his essential kingdom is as independent as that of God the Fa-

ther, "he being in the form of God, and thinks it no robbery to be equal with God.

15. He is a puissant and warlike King. He is "the Lord of hosts; he is a man of war." He encountered Satan, and wounded, bruised, and destroyed him upon Mount Calvary, and he will wage war for ever against all that refuse his government, and say, "We will not have this man to rule over us." He will send out his armies and destroy them; and not only his own vengeance, but the vengeance of his Father will fall on them, Psal. cx. 1, &c.

16. He is "the King of glory," Psal. xxiv. When the summons is given to sinners, to "lift up the everlasting doors" of their hearts to him, they are told, that it is no less a person than "the King of glory" that calls. Solomon, in all his glory, could not compare with the lily, far less with him who is "the brightness of his Father's glory," and on whom hangs all the glory of his Father's house, Is. xxii. 24, &c.

I should now proceed to the other things in the method; but I pass them at the time, and shall only offer a word of use to what has been said, in a few inferences.

1. See what happy persons the true and loyal subjects of Christ (believers) are. As it was said by the queen of Sheba, concerning the servants of Solomon, so may we say of them, they are happy, for they dwell in the King's court, Psal. lxxxiv., &c. All his subjects are made sons and heirs, "kings and priests unto God;" their King hears them when they call, Psal. xx. 9. They enjoy peace under his administration. They have trouble from the world; but "in him they have peace;" they dwell on high, dwell in safety. They shall all be well seen to in the day of famine and trouble.

2. See the dangerous risk they run that invade his government, and contemn his authority.

Quest. Who are these?

Answ. 1. They that turn the authority, derived from him, to the hurt and prejudice of his kingdom and interest. All power and authority, whether civil or ecclesiastical, is derived from him. All civil power is from him: "By me kings rule." He sets up kings and casts them down at his pleasure. And therefore it must be a dangerous abuse of civil authority, to enact laws invading the royalties of his crown, and the liberties of his subjects; laws countenancing witchcraft; laws for the profaning of his day and worship, and for modelling the courts of his house, and officers of his kingdom, according to their mind; laws obliging the ambassadors of Zion's King to change their holding, and to become the heralds and officers of king and parliament. Again, as all civil, so all ecclesias-

tical authority is derived from him, as the fountain of it, having "all power in heaven and earth." And if so, what a horrid conspiracy against the King of Zion must it be, to employ that power for screening the erroneous, and censuring those that bear witness for him, for violating the rights and privileges of his subjects, and carrying on violent intrusions of officers into his house, to the dividing, destroying, and scattering of his subjects? We may easily think what the King will do with such courts and officers, when he reckons with them.

2. They invade his kingdom and authority, who adventure to model his visible kingdom in the world, after their own fancy, and not according to the pattern showed in the holy mount of divine revelation. The land-marks of the kingdom of Christ have been set from the word of God, by our great and worthy forefathers in this land, and adopted by the oath of the great God; and they who go about to remove these land-marks, and to cast the government of the church of Christ into another shape, as Episcopalians and sectarians do, there is ground to suspect them as being enemies to the King of Zion. And, among other things that convince me of the error both of the Episcopalian and Independent schemes of government, this is one,—that I never heard tell of one of their way, that suffered martyrdom for Christ, as King of Zion, particularly for his alone headship and sovereignty in his church. The spite and spirit of malignancy and persecution never ran against any of these ways, at least in this land; for "the world loveth its own." But it is well known, that all the power of hell, and of ecclesiastical and civil tyranny, has been bended for suppressing that form of government, which has been so solemnly adopted, from the word of God in Scotland; which, to me, beside other things, is a convincing evidence, that it is of divine original. When King Charles II. was restored to the crown, against whom or what did he bend his power? Was it against Episcopacy? No; he restored that form of government both in England and Scotland. Was it against Independents and sectarians, who had taken off his father's head? One would have thought, that the storm should have broken in a way of resentment upon them; but I do not remember to have heard, that one drop of their blood was spilt during that persecuting period; the storm lighted upon those of the Presbyterian way, both in Scotland and England. Was this, because they had joined the usurper, or endeavoured to cut off the family of the Stuarts? The contrary of this is well known to all who know the history of these times. No good reason can be conceived, why the flood of persecution ran, with such vio-

lence, against them beyond all others, but that given Rev. xii. 17, because they "kept the commandments of God," with reference to the kingdom of his Son, "and held the testimony of Jesus Christ, and the word of his patience."

3. They contemn the authority of the King of Zion, who walk willingly after the commandments of men, in opposition to the commands of Christ. When the commandments of men interfere with the authority of Christ, it is plain, from the practice of the apostles, and of the three children, what we are to do: "Whether it be right to obey God or man, judge ye," said the apostles before the Jewish sanhedrim. And, says the three children, when required by an angry king, in view of a fiery furnace, to bow down to his idol, "We are not careful to answer thee in this matter," &c. How culpable, then, are those men, who call themselves ministers, officers, and ambassadors of Christ, who, contrary to the laws of his house, at the commandment of worm man, are profaning his Sabbaths, polluting his worship, prostituting their office by sinful compliance, and throwing up the headship and sovereignty of Christ, our only King, Judge, and Lawgiver, and casting the jewels of his crown under the feet of men?

They will be found equally guilty, who stand by, and see those injuries done to the King of Zion by others, and, who though they be not themselves actors, yet, I say, stand by as spectators, or are silent without witnessing against these things, yea, associate themselves with traitors to the Redeemer's crown, as though they were his loyal subjects and officers. Would any man be reckoned a loyal subject to King George, especially any who have sworn the allegiance and abjuration, and are intrusted with any honorary and beneficial posts, and are daily eating the king's bread, and receiving his pay; I say, what would any think of such a person being witness to manifest treason committed against the king, and yet should hold his peace; and not only so, but allow such to sit in the king's courts, and sit with them as if they had done no injury? When manifest treasons are committed against the King of Zion, and corruptions either in principle or practice, are allowed, and not purged out by discipline, when the majority of a church, and of her judicatories, are in a conspiracy, the plain command, in that case, is, 2 Cor. vi. 17, to "come out from among them, and to be separate, not to touch the unclean thing," that the Lord may *receive us*. "When the corrupt party are few," says Hooker, "they are to be cast out; but when the body, or majority of the church, becomes wicked," then, says he, "the sound part is to withdraw from her;" for which he cites the above

scripture, 2 Cor. vi. 17. The apostle Paul, when he orders the incestuous person to be cast out by excommunication, gives this reason for it, because "a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump;" plainly intimating, that when the whole lump of a church is leavened with unpurged scandal and error, she is like the house under the law, over-run with the leprosy, which was not only to be left by the inhabitants, but to be taken down to the foundation. Sin is, in scripture, compared to smoke. You know, when a house is so smoky, that it is like to stifle the breath, or smother the inhabitants, there is no help for it, they must leave the house, and seek new lodgings.

Last inference. See from this doctrine an excellent rule for all the subjects of the King of Zion, who desire to be found faithful to him in a dark and cloudy day, how to steer their course. You know, in the time of a revolt and insurrection in a kingdom, against the government, when all things are running to confusion, the loyal subjects, who adhere to the interest of their king, make inquiry after the king's standard. Their question is not, Who have the greatest numbers? or, Where is the greatest body of men swaying? But if the king's standard be lifted up, however few they be that own it, Why, their question is, Where does it stand? or, What is the party that are cleaving to it? This is the very case in this divided and distracted day wherein we live. There is an insurrection against the King of Zion, even in the house of his professed friends, and even under the covert of his name and authority. Ecclesiastical judicatories are carrying matters quite contrary to the laws of his kingdom and the privileges of his subjects; and yet affirm, that they have his authority to do these things. A judicial testimony is lifted up against their corrupt courses, both in matters of doctrine, discipline, and government; and yet many that profess friendship to the King of Zion in this land, are in a suspense to what hand to turn; why, the way to come to a resolution is, to inquire, Where stands the standard of the covenanted testimony of Christ in the land? whether within or without the camp? If it be held faithfully within the camp, then it is duty to join it there: but if it be without the camp, we are to follow it there, although we should be obliged to take up the cross in following it.

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ZION'S KING.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.—PSAL. II. 6.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

THE doctrine was, "That Christ is King in Zion, the only Head and Sovereign of his church, by his Father's appointment and ordination." *Yet have I set my King*, &c.

The method in which I proposed to prosecute the doctrine, was,

I. To give some account of this sovereign Prince here spoken of.

II. To give some account of his kingdom, and the administration of it.

III. Why God the Father has lodged the government upon him.

IV. Apply.

I have only spoken to the first, given some account of this royal Prince, who is by God vested with the sovereignty, and made some application.

II. I come now to *give some account of Christ's kingdom, and the administration of it.* Here, 1. I shall offer a few distinctions of Christ's kingdom. 2. Show why the church is called *the holy hill of Zion.* 3. Give you some of the properties or qualities of Christ's kingdom. 4. Discourse a little concerning the actual execution and administration of the kingdom of Christ, as Mediator.

The *first* thing is, to offer a few distinctions of Christ's kingdom. Know, then, that the kingdom of the Son of God is twofold, either essential, or personal. His essential kingdom belongs to him, as to his divine nature, or as he is the Son of God, the second person of the glorious and ever blessed Trinity, the same in substance, equal in power and glory with the Father, and the Holy Ghost. Christ, considered in this view, is the great Lord, Creator of heaven and earth, and of all things in it, and the government and disposal belong to him by right of creation. But it is not of this absolute or essential kingdom of Christ that I now speak; but of his personal and mediatory kingdom, as he is Immanuel, God-man; and under this consideration he acts by a delegated autho-

rity, or a power committed, or given him by the Father, for the salvation of the elect that were given him. Man being fallen from the state in which he was created, must, in order to his recovery, be brought under another model of government, than that which he was under at his creation, when he was subject to God only as his Creator and Benefactor, promising life to him upon the terms of the covenant of works; I say, in order to his recovery, a new scene of government behooved to be erected; the plan of which was laid in the council of peace from eternity. By virtue of this plan of government, the first person of the glorious Trinity sustains the part of the supreme Judge, passing a sentence of condemnation upon all mankind for the breach of his holy law; but yet so far dispenses with the rigour of the law; as to admit of a ransom and satisfaction. God, in the person of the Son, sustains the place of a Mediator, Surety, and Redeemer, promising to satisfy and to repair the honour of the holy law. Upon which undertaking, the Judge is so well pleased, that, in order to the accomplishment of the Son's undertaking, "all power in heaven and in earth is given him:" all government is committed to the Son, angels, men, and devils, and all creatures are put into his hand, that he may make them subservient to the recovery of that poor contemptible creature man. And it is upon this foundation, that the great JEHOVAH says, in the text and context, *Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.* "I will declare the decree: the Lord hath said unto me, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee. Ask of me, and I will give thee the heathen," &c.

Now, the mediatory kingdom of Christ, is either more general or special.

1. His general mediatory kingdom extends itself over heaven, earth, and hell, (as I said just now:) Eph. i., at the close: "God hath given him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body." Phil. ii. 9—11: "At, or in, the name of Jesus every knee must bow, of things in heaven, and things on earth, and things under the earth; and every tongue must confess, that Jesus Christ is the Lord, to the glory of God the Father." All persons, kingdoms, and revolutions of affairs in the world, are ordered and managed by our Mediator and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. He sets up kings and pulls them down, as serves the designs of his glory, and of his church's good: hence it is proposed, as matter of triumph to the church in her distress, Psal. cxlvi. 10: "The Lord doth reign for ever, even thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the Lord."

2. The kingdom of Christ is to be considered as more spe-

cial and particular; and so his church is his kingdom, in which, and over which, he reigns. This kingdom, or church of Christ, is sometimes in scripture called *his body;* because of the union that is between him and them: sometimes *his flock;* because he, as a shepherd, watches over them, and provides them their pasture.

Now, this particular kingdom of Christ, the church, is to be considered, either as militant on earth, or triumphant in heaven. The church triumphant is that part of the saints of God, who are, by death, gathered to him in glory, where Christ is; and the heavens are to contain him and them, until "the restitution of all things," at the end of time, when he will descend to the last judgment, and all his saints and angels attending him as his retinue. But it is of the church militant on earth I now speak. They are called militant because they are yet in a state of war upon the field of battle, wrestling with sin, Satan, and the world, &c.

The militant church, again, is either visible or invisible. The invisible church catholic consists of all believers, who are savingly united to Christ, as their head of influence and government, by his regenerating and sanctifying Spirit. And these are called his invisible church, because the bonds of union between him and them, are such as are not visible to the eye of the world; they are not perceptible by sense and reason, their life, and all the concerns thereof, are "hid with Christ in God," and therefore sometimes called his *hidden ones.* The visible catholic church of Christ consists of all these through the whole world, who make a visible and credible profession of their faith in Christ, and subjection to him as their Prophet, Priest, and King, and who own and acknowledge the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government, that he has appointed, having the gospel preached to them by ambassadors of his sending, and his ordinances administered. This catholic visible church, consisting of all that profess the name of Christ, but especially of those who really believe in him; this is that which in my text is called *the holy hill of Zion,* over which Christ reigns.

To all that has been said, I shall only add, upon this head, that the members of the catholic church, being spread over the face of the whole earth, wherever the gospel is preached, it is impossible that they can have a local communion one with another, in this world, in worshipping their glorious head, Jesus Christ, although it were desirable, if it could be attained. But because this cannot be attained, therefore the catholic church is divided into national churches, provincial churches, presbyterial churches, parochial churches, domestic churches, (for we read of the church of Christ in a house, or

particular family;) but all these are only so many parts, lesser or greater, of the catholic church of Christ through the world, which have "one Lord, one faith, one baptism. But I do not stand farther upon this. So much shall serve for giving you a general view of the church, or kingdom of Christ in the world.

The *second* thing is, to show why the church is called *the holy hill of Zion.* For clearing of this, you would know, that mount Zion, literally, was a hill situated in the best part of the world, namely, Canaan, and in the best part of Canaan, which was the tribe of Judah, and in the best part of that tribe, namely, in the city of Jerusalem. This hill had two heads, or tops, the one of which was called *Moriah*, upon which the temple was built, by which it became the seat of all the solemn worship under the old economy; the other top was called *the city of David*, because David's palace was there, the royal residence of the kings of Judah and Israel. The church of Christ is frequently, both in the scriptures of the Old and New Testament, spoken of under the notion of this hill of Zion, particularly, Psal. cxxxii. 13: "The Lord hath chosen Zion: he hath desired it for his habitation," &c. And Heb. xii. 22: "Ye are come unto Mount Zion," says the apostle, speaking of the New Testament church. Now, Mount Zion typified the gospel church upon these or the like accounts.

1. Mount Zion and Jerusalem was the habitation of Jebusites, a company of cursed and idolatrous Canaanites. So is the church, by nature, enemies to God, "aliens to the commonwealth of Israel," &c.

2. Mount Zion was taken by David out of the hands of the Jebusites. So Christ, our blessed David, made a conquest of his church: he not only buys her with his blood from the hand of justice, but by the dint of the sword; girded on his thigh, he takes her by main force out of the hand of Satan; the weapons he makes use of for this end not being "carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong-holds," &c.

3. David fortified Zion for his own use, and the sole place of his residence. So Christ fixes his spiritual residence in Zion: "In Salem is his tabernacle, and his dwelling-place in Zion." And his presence in her makes her impregnable, "The Lord is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved:" hence is that song, Is. xxvi. 1: "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah, We have a strong city; salvation hath God appointed unto her for walls and for bulwarks."

4. Mount Zion and Jerusalem was renowned above all ci-

ties in the known world. So the church of Christ is the most renowned society upon earth, renowned for her dignity, her trade, her immunities, her present privileges, and future prospects.

5. Zion was the place of public worship, the ark was there, and all the solemn worship of Israel was there. So, in the New Testament church are the ordinances for worship, word, prayer, praise, sacraments, and the like; these galleries of the King of Zion, where he holds fellowship with his subjects, and allows them access to his presence, and communion with him.

6. All the sacred things of God were kept in Zion; there were the law, the oracles of God, the Shechinah, the pot of manna, the mercy seat, the tabernacle. So the church of Christ is the repository of all the sacred things of heaven; to her belong the adoption, the promises, the covenant; the ordinances, the doctrine, the worship, the discipline, the government, and truths of Christ are committed to her custody. O how zealous should the New Testament church, and every minister and member of it, be for the preservation of these in their purity and power!

7. We find an opposition stated in scripture between mount Zion and mount Sinai, Gal. iv. God came down for a season on Sinai; but he comes to dwell on mount Zion, &c.; he appeared in terror on Sinai; but Zion, or Jerusalem, is a vision of peace: he forsook Sinai, and left it in bondage; but Zion is free for ever: he gave the law on mount Sinai; but the gospel on mount Zion, &c.

The *third* thing is, to give you some of the properties or qualities of Christ's kingdom.

1. Then, It is a spiritual kingdom. It is not of this world, as the Jews imagined, and as others imagine, who would fashion and mould it according to the kingdom of this world. The laws, the ordinances, the discipline, and the whole of this kingdom is spiritual, and has a relation principally to the souls of men and women, and an eternal state to come. And seeing it is so, what a strange notion of the kingdom of Christ must men and judicatories among us have, who distinguish men in the affairs of Christ's kingdom by the gold ring, gay clothing, and worldly heritages. Alas! true notions of the kingdom of Christ are generally lost among us in this generation. Some have no other notion of the church of Christ, than a society of men meeting together, under the name of judicatories, under the protection of civil authority, whether they be acting according to the laws of Christ, or against them, for the interest of the body of Christ, or to its hurt and prejudice; whether they be holding Christ as a head, or

practically renouncing his headship, however they profess the contrary. I make no difficulty to affirm, that a church not holding the head, Christ, in all his offices, is but an idol of man's making; and zeal for such a church is but like the zeal of those who cried, "The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord are these," and yet were real enemies to the God of the temple; or like Ephraim, concerning whom it is said, "Ephraim hath forsaken the Lord, and buildeth temples." I say then, that the kingdom of Christ is of a spiritual nature, and it relates principally to the soul, or the inner man: hence Christ declares concerning his disciples and followers, "The kingdom of God is within you;" and without this, it is little matter of what church or communion we are.

2. Christ's catholic kingdom is of a large extent. It is true, under the Old Testament dispensation, the kingdom of Christ was pent up within the confines of the land of Judea: "To them belonged the adoption, the covenants, the law, and the promises," while the generality of the Gentile nations were held as dogs, aliens to Israel's commonwealth, &c. But blessed be God, now the waters of the sanctuary have run down to the valley of Shittim, and the gospel is "preached unto all nations, for the obedience of faith." Psal. ii. 8: "I will give him the heathen for his inheritance," &c. Psal. lxxii. 8: "His dominion shall reach from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth."

3. Although the kingdom of Christ, I mean his true church, be of a large extent, yet it is but a little kingdom, I mean, it is not populous, when compared with the kingdom of the god of this world. Christ's flock is but a *little flock*, comparatively considered, Luke xii. 32, &c. They are but little in respect of their numbers. Indeed, abstractly considered, at the end of the day, they will make an "innumerable company, which no man can number;" but, viewed in comparison of the wicked, they are but few: "strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it;" like the gleanings after the vintage, "I will take them one of a city, and two of a family, and bring them unto Zion." They are but little in respect of quality. Christ's subjects are generally among the poorer sort of people: "God hath chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom." 1 Cor. i. 26:—"Not many wise men after the flesh," &c. They are little in regard of esteem; the world make but little account of them; they are generally reckoned the dross and offscourings of the earth, 1 Cor. iv. 11—13: but however little account the world may make of them, yet when Christ, at the end of the day, presents

them to his Father, they will "shine like the stars, yea, like the sun in the kingdom of their Father."

4. The kingdom of Christ in this world is a kingdom of light. The church is called the "valley of vision," because of the light of the revelation that shines in it. Wherever Christ sets up his kingdom in a land, though it [before] "sat in darkness," the people of it are made to "see great light." Light arises to them that "sat in the regions of the shadow of death." And all that are the true subjects of Christ's kingdom, are "translated out of darkness into his marvellous light;" the light of the glory of God, in the face of Christ, shines into their hearts.

5. It is a heavenly kingdom. Matth. iii. 2, says John Baptist, when Christ was come to set up his standard, and sway his sceptre among the Jews, "Repent ye; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." And, Heb. xii. 22: "Ye are come unto mount Zion, unto the heavenly Jerusalem." All the loyal subjects of the kingdom are heaven-born, &c.; they are all pointing toward heaven in their way, and walk, and traffic, their "conversation is in heaven," and they are looking for "a better country, that is, a heavenly," Heb. xi. 16.

6. It is a regular and well governed kingdom: "Jerusalem is a city compactly built together." We have a description of the regularity and good order of the kingdom of Christ, under the notion of a city built four-square, Rev. xxi. See to this purpose, Eph. iv. 16. There are many irregularities and disorders in the church of Christ, as she is managed by the hands of men, as sad experience testifies among us at this day; but as she is under the administration of the great King that God has set in the midst of her, there is nothing but beauty and order. If the church of Christ were, even his visible militant church, governed exactly according to Zion's laws by her pretended officers, there would be nothing but order and beauty in the whole kingdom; but when men go about to make other laws than the laws of Christ, and to make their will the standard of government, rather than the will of the great King, this casts all into confusion, and yet even these confusions are managed by the King for the advantage of his true kingdom and subjects, and in due time he will bring light out of darkness, and order out of confusion.

7. The true kingdom of Christ is a kingdom that is much hated by the devil and the world. She is just the eye-sore of hell, and all its confederates; hence we are told in the beginning of this psalm, that when Christ comes to set up his kingdom, "The heathen rage, the people imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth, and princes thereof, take coun-

sel" how to suppress this kingdom of Christ. The gates of hell wage war against the kingdom of Christ. The world loves its own, who are under the government of the "god of this world," and who "walk according to the course of this world;" but they hate the laws, the ordinances, the discipline, and subjects of Christ's kingdom; they are intolerable to them, and therefore they are always trying to make themselves rid of them: hence are all the reproaches, afflictions, persecutions, and massacres of the followers of Christ, that we read of both in sacred and profane history.

8. Notwithstanding of this, the kingdom of Christ is a stable, firm, and everlasting kingdom; it is like the "little stone cut out of the mountain," that dashes all the kingdoms of the earth in pieces, and yet itself is not dashed or broken. As the King of Zion is himself "the everlasting God," so his kingdom is "an everlasting kingdom, and of his dominion there shall be no end." He shall "rule over the house of Jacob for ever and ever."

9. The kingdom which Christ governs is a holy kingdom. The church of Christ, even his visible church, is a sanctified society, federally holy; you see in the text it is called *the holy hill of Zion.* All the members of the visible church are dedicated to God in baptism, in which ordinance we renounce all filthiness both of the flesh and spirit, and are solemnly engaged to wage war against sin, and to "resist it even unto blood." The design of all church discipline, and of all ordinances, ministers, officers, and judicatories, is to preserve the church, or kingdom of Christ, from corruption, either in principle or practice, that she may be a holy lump to him. Whenever any scandal breaks out in a church, it is to be purged out by the discipline of Christ's appointment, lest that leaven leaven the whole lump, and provoke the Lord, the holy One of Israel, to depart from her. In 1 Cor. iii. 17, the church is called *the temple of God:* "The temple of God is holy; and if any man defile the temple of God, him will God destroy." If this word of God be true, as I am sure it is, they stand but a sorry chance at this day, who are defiling the church of Christ, by complicated and multiplied scandals, of which I have taken notice in the preceding part of this discourse.

The *fourth* thing here was, to discourse a little concerning the actual execution and administration of the kingdom of Christ, as Mediator. Now, this falls under a two-fold consideration. 1. We may consider it as having respect to his general mediatory kingdom, over all things for his church. Or, 2. With respect to his special mediatory kingdom, or administration in and over his church.

First, I say we may consider Christ's government, as it relates to his general mediatory kingdom. And so it takes in all things in heaven, earth, and hell; for "things in heaven, things on earth, and things under the earth, must bow at the name of Jesus, and every tongue must confess, that he is the Lord, and that he hath all power and authority in heaven and in earth." Now, considering Christ's kingdom in this extensive view, his government and administration take in these few things following:—

1. His sustaining and "upholding of all things by the word of his power," as the apostle speaks, Heb. iii. 3. Our Redeemer, our Almighty King of Zion, is none other than the great God that made the heavens and the earth: John i. 3: "Without him was not any thing made that was made. By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." And as he made all things by a word, so by the word of his power he upholdeth them in their being; "by him all things consist," Col. i. 17. This world is like a great theatre, upon which a glorious scene was to be acted, for the glory and honour of the free grace of God, in the salvation of a certain number of the lost race of Adam; and whenever the scene is ended, in the salvation of the last elect soul, the theatre is to be taken down, and then "the heavens will pass away with a great noise," &c.; but, until the scene be ended, the theatre and all things in it, are upheld by the royal power and authority of the King of Zion.

2. Christ, the King of Zion, by virtue of his general mediatory power and authority, permits devils and wicked men to be, and act as they do; for "the deceived and the deceiver are his," Job. xii. 16. There we are told, that he suffered all nations to walk in their own way; he suffers the devil and persecutors sometimes, for holy and wise ends, cruelly to harass and persecute the righteous; to this purpose is that which he says to the church of Smyrna, Rev. ii. 10: "Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: but be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life." Thus, Rev. xii., he suffered the old dragon "to make war with the woman, and her seed, which kept the commandments of God, and the testimony of Jesus." This permissive power and providence, which Christ, as King of Zion, exercises with relation to the enemies of his church and people, is a glorious ground of encouragement to them in all their trials and troubles, that it is the Lord that allows the enemy to do this or that; especially if it be considered,

3. That by this absolute power of the King of Zion, he restrains and bridles up devils and men, and says to them, as he does to the proud waves of the sea, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no farther." Psal. lxxvi. 10: "The wrath of man shall praise thee; and the remainder of his wrath wilt thou restrain." Thus he restrained both Laban's and Esau's resentment against Jacob, and Sennacherib in his destructive designs against the whole kingdom of Judah and Jerusalem. Christ, as King of Zion, has his chain about the devil's neck, and the necks of all his wicked instruments in the world, and whenever they have gone the length of the link of the chain, which he has ordained, he gives the chain a pull, and then they are obliged to stop; the remainder of their wrath he restrains and binds up. We see this in the case of Job; when the devil was let loose to harass him, he always went as far as his chain allowed him, but then he could go no farther, till his chain was lengthened; and the same is the case with respect to his church and people: Rev. xx. 1—3, he lays hold on the dragon, that old serpent, the devil, and binds him a thousand years with a great chain. The devil and his instruments at this day are burdened with the word of Christ's patience and testimony, and gladly would they destroy the witnesses, and all that cleave to his testimony; but they are like so many dogs, or lions chained by the King of Zion; they can go no farther than he allows them; and he will allow them to go no farther than he sees for his glory, and his people's good.

4. Another act of Christ's royal and absolute power, as King of Zion, is his protecting and defending his church in the midst of the most threatening and imminent dangers; hence they are called by the apostle Jude, the "preserved in Christ Jesus." You know when Christ appeared to Moses in the bush, he saw the bush burning in the midst of the fire, yet the bush was not consumed: the thing represented by this to Moses, was, the present situation of the church of Israel in Egypt, they were under sharp and exquisite sufferings under their cruel taskmasters; and the safety of the bush in the midst of the flames, represented the safety of Israel in the midst of all these troubles, under the care and tuition of Christ, that he would not suffer them to be swallowed up by their cruel enemies; no, he would see to their safety, "in the floods of great waters they shall not be overwhelmed," and in the hottest flames they shall not be consumed, &c.

5. By the royal authority of Zion's King, he overrules and governs all creatures, and all their actions, yea, the most dark and cloudy dispensations, for his own and his Father's glory, and for the good and advantage of his church and people, ac-

cording to that promise, Rom. viii. 28: "All things shall work together for good, to them that love God." We see at this day very strange things casting up in the wheel of providence; we hear of wars and rumours of wars abroad; we see the mighty pulled out of their seats by death; we see signs in the heavens above, much like these that were seen before the destruction of Jerusalem; we see the winds blowing in the barn of the visible church, much chaff casting up, many blown away from their former profession; we see God making a separation between those that fear him, and others that are void of his fear; we see the enemy raging in the Lord's sanctuary, breaking down the carved work of the temple, and the crown of Christ profaned, and set upon the head of a mortal creature. Well, sense and reason, when it sits judge of these and the like dispensations, is put to a nonplus; but if the eye of faith be opened, it will see the King of Zion, by his power, ruling and overruling all these ups and downs to the advantage of his kingdom, and the carrying on of the designs of his glory in the salvation of his mystical body.

6. By his royal power, as King of Zion, he avenges himself and his church upon all his and their enemies, as we see in the close of this psalm: "He shall break them as with a rod of iron, and dash them in pieces as a potter's vessel." The beast and the false prophet, and the great whore, Gog and Magog, death and hell, shall be "cast into the lake of fire and brimstone," Rev. xx.; Psal. cx., he will "make his enemies his footstool, he will strike through kings in the day of his wrath, fill the places with dead bodies, and wound the heads over many nations."

7. He will, at last, finally liberate his church and people from all those evils, sorrows, and troubles, under which she groans, Rev. xxi. 3, 4. These are some of the acts of Christ's government, in his general mediatory kingdom, over all things.

But, *secondly*, I come, more particularly, to consider the government of the King of Zion in his church, and among his people, which is his particular kingdom. And here, again, with respect to his invisible kingdom of believers, there are these acts of his royal power that he puts forth:—

1. He subdues them to himself. By nature they are the vassals of hell, "walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that rules in the children of disobedience." But in a day of his power, by swaying the rod of his strength, he makes of rebels *a willing people;* he convinces them of sin and misery, makes his arrows sharp in the heart of his enemies; he enlightens their minds in the knowledge of himself, discovers

his personal and mediatory glory, the way and method of salvation through him; he bends the iron sinew of their rebellious wills, and makes them to fall in with the way of salvation revealed in the gospel; he persuades, and, by his grace, enables them to believe in him, and so to embrace him as he is exhibited and set forth to them in the promise and offer of the gospel. And thus the King of Zion calls and conquers the vassals of the devil, and makes them his loyal subjects. This work of the King of Zion, does not come with like observation in every one of his subjects, every one has not a like measure of law-work; some are dealt with in a more mild way, like Lydia, "whose heart the Lord opened" in the hearing of Paul; others must be hewed and battered with the hammer of the law, before they will yield: however, every subject of Christ, in their effectual calling, has so much of law-work as is sufficient to loose them from the first Adam, and to discover the vanity of all attempts to seek righteousness and life by Adam's covenant; so much of it as to discover their absolute need of Christ for "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption:" and thus Christ becomes "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth."

2. Christ, as King of Zion, writes his law on the hearts of all his subjects: Jer. xxxi. 33: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." The moment a sinner is translated from the power of darkness to the kingdom of the Son of God, he that moment inlays a principle of holiness in the soul, a conformity to his laws; so that the man "delights in the law of the Lord, after the inner man." Hence are these breathings and longings of soul after holiness of heart and life, "O that my ways were directed to keep thy statutes! Hold up my goings in thy paths," &c. "O let my heart be sound in thy statutes, that I may not be ashamed:" and hence, also, are those groanings among the subjects of Christ, under the remains of a body of sin and death like that of Paul, "O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of sin and death! Iniquities prevail against me," &c.

3. Christ, as King of Zion, enforces subjection to his laws, and that both by promises and penalties, suited to the nature of his government, and the administration of grace. If they break his laws, and keep not his commandments, he declares that he will "visit their iniquities with the rod, and their transgressions with stripes." And, on the other hand, he tells them, that, in the way of obedience and holiness, he will meet them, and hold fellowship and communion with them; and thus, "in keeping his commandments, there is a great re-

ward." "He meeteth him that rejoiceth, and worketh righteousness, and remembers him in his ways."

4. Christ, as King of Zion, casts a copy of obedience to all his subjects, and calls them to imitate him; for, "though he was a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things that he suffered." And he says to all his subjects, "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly; take my yoke upon you," &c. He has "left us an example, that we should follow his steps;" and, accordingly, every true subject of Christ studies to imitate his King, to run his race, "Looking unto Jesus."

5. Christ, in his invisible kingdom, actuates and excites all his subjects to obedience to him, by his own Spirit, which he puts within them, according to that promise, Ezek. xxxvi. 27: "I will put my Spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes:" and by this Spirit of his in them, he makes them to study holiness in all manner of conversation; and their "light is made to shine so before men, that others, seeing their good works, are made to glorify their Father which is in Heaven."

6. Christ, as King of Zion, meekens the hearts of his subjects to a due regard to all the intimations of his mind and will, so that every one of them is ready to say, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" They just wait with submission, like a servant waiting the commands of his master, and then he gives direction according to that promise: "The meek will he guide in judgment, the meek will he teach his way."

7. Christ, as King of Zion, corrects and chastens his subjects; "for if we be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are we bastards, and not sons." Christ will let these faults pass in aliens and foreigners, that he will severely correct in his own subjects: "You only have I known of all the families of the earth; therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities." Sometimes, by his rods and corrections, he will make their bodies smart with sickness, as in the case of Hezekiah and others. Sometimes he will make them to smart in their worldly substance, by reducing them to poverty, as you see in Job, whose substance he gave over to the Sabean and Chaldean robbers. Sometimes he will make them to smart in their relations, friends, and children, by taking away the desire of their eyes with a stroke, or other things that are sharper than death, &c. Sometimes he will make them to smart in their name, by reproach and calumny, and letting loose the tongues of a wicked world upon them, yea, even the tongues of their fellow-subjects, as in the case of Job and his friends, &c. Sometimes he will correct his subjects in

their inner man, their soul, which is the sharpest of his rods. Sometimes he will turn away the face of his throne, and hide his countenance, and then they are ready to cry with David, Psal. xxx. 7: "Thou didst hide thy face, and I was troubled." Sometimes he will go that length in his correction with his subjects, that he will [appear] as an enemy, make the arrows of his reproof to "drink up their spirits," as we see in the case of Job and Heman and others. And sometimes he corrects them so as to make both external and internal trouble, like two seas, to meet upon them, so as "deep calls unto deep:" this we see in the case of Joseph's brethren, and of David, Psal. cxvi. 3; when both "the sorrows of death and the pains of hell" took hold on him, and then he "found trouble and sorrow" to purpose: and the same we see in the case of Jonah, when he shifted the work and service that his Master, the King of Zion, called him to, with respect to Nineveh, &c.

8. As King of Zion he commands peace, quiet, comfort, and deliverance to his subjects; he turns the storm into a calm; when the wind and tempest of external troubles are blowing so hard, that they threaten no less than death and utter ruin, he comes treading upon the waves of the sea, and says to the wind and waves, "Peace, be still; and immediately there" is "a great calm." And as for the internal storms of troubles of mind, he quiets them also, by commanding, or speaking "peace to them that are far off," Is. lvii. 19; or by lifting up the light of his reconciled countenance on them, by which he "puts more gladness in their heart, than when corn, wine, and oil doth abound."—Now, by these, or the like acts of his kingly government, he manages his invisible kingdom of believers, until he give the finishing stroke to the work of sanctification at death, and then he transports them, under a convoy of angels, from the church militant, to the church triumphant, where they shall sing that song, Col. i. 12: "Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light;" and Rev. i. 5, 6: "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen."

THE SOVEREIGNTY OF ZION'S KING.

Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion.—PSAL. II. 6.

THE THIRD SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I ENDEAVOURED, last Lord's day, to give some account of Christ's government and administration in his general mediatory kingdom over all things for his church's sake, and also some acts of his royal authority, put forth with respect to his invisible kingdom of believers; and now I come to speak a little of his kingdom, as it relates to his visible church. And here I shall, for the more distinctness, 1. Prove, that Christ, the King of Zion, has a visible kingdom in the world. 2. Take notice of some acts of his royal authority in this visible kingdom.

The *first* thing here is to prove, that Christ has a visible church, or kingdom in this world. And this will be evident, if we consider,

1. That the King of Zion himself is visible as to his human nature. It is true, he is behind the veil, so that now we see him not as to his corporeal presence; but you know, a man may be in a far country, out of our sight, and yet still be a visible person; so here, though Christ be in the land afar off, yet still he is visible as to his human nature. His divine nature is invisible by bodily eyes, but his human nature still remains visible. He was visible to ocular sight when he was upon earth. The apostles declare that he was seen of them, both before and after his resurrection, and that they saw him visibly ascend into glory. The inhabitants of heaven are beholding the glory of a GOD-MAN. And after he was ascended, he was seen of Paul and of Stephen, even with their bodily eyes. And when he comes again, "every eye shall see him, and they also that pierced him." Now, I say, Zion's King being himself visible, his mystical body must be of a piece with himself, and be a company of visible men and women, bearing some visible character of their relation to him, which are not to be seen in the rest of the world.

2. The laws, and ordinances, and officers of Christ, are all visible; and therefore he has a visible, as well as an invisible kingdom in the world. Your eyes see your teachers; you hear us speaking to you in his name, publishing his laws, and dispensing the ordinance of his appointment.

3. There is a visible difference between the kingdom of Christ, and the kingdom of the devil. The devil's kingdom is a kingdom of darkness, and the works of his subjects are "the works of darkness;" but Christ's kingdom is a kingdom of light, and the light of holiness shines in their way and walk, to the glory of God, and the edification of others, according to that of Christ, Matth. v. 16: "Let your light so shine before men, as others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." The subjects of Christ's kingdom walk in the narrow way of holiness, and have their Father's name written on their foreheads, have a visible and credible profession of Christ, by which all that run may read that they own Christ as their King. The subjects of the devil walk in the broad way of sin, and have his name and badge about them, by which they are known to be the children of the devil, and the seed of the serpent.

4. The charge that is given to ministers, in the dispensation of the solemn ordinances of the New Testament, to make a difference between the clean and the unclean, the holy and the profane, proves that Christ has a visible kingdom, and visible subjects in this world. We are forbidden to cast that which is holy to dogs, and commanded to make a difference between those whom we admit to the seals of the covenant, and others. Now, how should ministers ever fulfil this charge given them, if there were not visible tokens, by which we may distinguish betwixt the one and the other?

5. There is a visible and open war betwixt the seed of the woman, and of the serpent. The seed of Christ are so far visible, that the devil and his instruments commonly know who are on the side of the Lamb, and bend their malice against them. Whenever a sinner takes [part] with Christ, the world begins to hate him; which says there are some visible marks about Christ's subjects, by which the wicked themselves know them to belong to Christ. These things prove, that Christ has a visible kingdom, and visible subjects, in the world. It is true, there may be many hypocrites among these visible subjects; but in so far as they bear the badges of Christ's subjects, they are by men to be sustained as belonging to Christ's visible kingdom, until, like Judas, they cast off the mask, and discover themselves to be real enemies to Christ and his kingdom.

Secondly, I come to take notice of some acts of the royal authority of the King of Zion in his visible kingdom.

1. It is an act of his royal authority to give the lively oracles of his word to his visible church: "He," namely, Zion's King, "gave his statutes unto Jacob, and his testimonies unto Israel; he dealt not so with any nation." Whence is it that

the gospel comes to one nation, and not to another? Why was it given to the Jews under the Old Testament, when it was denied to the Gentiles? And whence is it, that now, under the New Testament, the gospel is preached to the Gentiles, when it is denied to the Jews? And whence is it, that the gospel is sent to us in this land, when many nations are worshipping the devil, for want of the knowledge of God and of his mind? Why, this is just an act of the sovereign power and pleasure of Zion's King.

2. By his royal authority he has appointed what form of government is to be observed in his visible kingdom. He has not left his church in a state of anarchy, or confusion, or to be moulded according to the fancies of men, as may best serve their political views and designs. Now, every piece of the Old Testament tabernacle was to be placed according to the pattern showed in the holy mount, much more the New Testament church, which is called "the true tabernacle of David," Acts xv. 16, compared with Amos ix. 11. What that form of government is, has been stated from the word of God, and solemnly sworn to by all ranks of the land, since our reformation from Popery. It is true, there are a set of men in the land, that set up for other schemes of government; but they that remove these land-marks, will do it to their cost.

3. His appointing officers, both ordinary and extraordinary, is another act of the royal authority of the King of Zion. We have an account of these officers of both kinds, Eph. iv. 11, 12: "When he ascended up on high," whenever he had sat down upon his throne of glory above, "he gave some apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the edifying of his body." You know it is the prerogative of the king to nominate, call, and appoint, whom he pleases as officers civil or military, under him in the government of the kingdom; and no man dare, upon his highest peril, assume any of these offices, from the highest to the lowest, without the king's commission; if he should, he would be found guilty of treason, and of usurping the king's prerogative: so is it in the kingdom of Christ; it is his prerogative to call, and send out officers to serve him, "and no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Christ himself did not go without his Father's commission, to act at his viceroy: "I the Lord have called thee; I will hold thine hand, and will help thee;" and if Christ would not run without his Father's commission and call, it must be dangerous for any to intrude themselves into the sacred offices of his kingdom, without his call and commission.

4. His appointing and ordaining the way in which his officers are to be chosen, and installed visibly in their office, is another act of Christ's royal power and authority, as King of Zion. As it is he that gives gifts unto men, for the edifying of his subjects; so he has given it as his pleasure, that his visible subjects, or those that are so in the judgment of charity, should be the electors of the office-bearers in his visible church or kingdom. It has been made evident, from Acts i., that when an apostle was to be chosen in the room of Judas, the hundred and twenty persons did nominate and present two to the apostles, and one of these was pitched upon by an immediate determination from heaven, because he was to be an extraordinary officer. It is clear, as a sun-beam, from Acts vi., that the multitude of the disciples elected the seven deacons, and presented them for ordination to the apostles. It is contended against this, that the manner of electing deacons, who were to have the charge of the poor, and of the public money appointed for their relief, is no argument for the election of ministers and elders, who are superior officers. But to this it is easily answered, that if it be the privilege of the visible church, and of Christ's visible and credible subjects, to have the choice of those who are to have the care of their money, much more of those who are to have the care and charge of their precious souls, which are far more valuable. The argument, from the less to the greater, is strong in this matter. It has been also cleared, from Acts xiv. 23, that the apostles, when going through and visiting the churches, which they had formerly planted, ordained elders, or presbyters, in every city, by *chierotonie*, or stretching out of the hand, which was the common way of taking the voices, of the people at that time, both in civil and sacred affairs. So that the manner of electing ministers and other officers in the church, is not left to a patron, a presbytery, or to men that are heritors in this world; no, but it is a privilege that belongs to the subjects of Christ's kingdom, or to the community of those who are visibly of, and in, the communion of the church of Christ, and who are walking according to his laws; by which means all ignorant, erroneous, or scandalous persons, or those who are not of the communion of the church, are evidently excluded. And this privilege of electing ministers and officers to the church, continued in the church till about seven hundred years after Christ, when it was violently wrested from them by the usurpations of Popery.

5. Another act of Christ's royal power and authority in his visible church, is his appointing ordinances for worship to be dispensed by ministers of the gospel, such as the public preaching of the gospel: "Go ye into all the world and

preach the gospel to every creature." This is the great ordinance of God for gathering of subjects to Christ's kingdom, and for the edifying of those that are brought in. And then there is the ordinance of baptism to be dispensed "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost." The ordinance of the supper, "What we received of the Lord, that we are to deliver." 1 Cor. xi. 23. And there is public prayer and praise, catechising, both in public, and teaching from house to house. These and the like ordinances, for edification and worship, Christ, as King of Zion, has appointed to be dispensed by ministers in his visible kingdom.

6. Christ, as King of Zion, has appointed censures for discipline and good order in his kingdom, for the removal of offences, and preventing the leaven of sin and scandal from running through and defiling his church, such as private and public admonition, reproof, exhortation, and the sentences of greater and lesser excommunication. These are called "the keys of the kingdom; and when these keys, or censures, are exercised according to Christ's appointment, by the officers of his kingdom, "what they bind on earth, is bound in heaven, and what they loose on earth, is loosed in heaven." The apostle, writing to the Corinthians respecting the scandal of incest, appoints such a person to be excommunicated, and delivered over to Satan, 1 Cor. v. 4, 5; and the reason he gives for passing such a censure, with respect to the church, is, that she might not be defiled with that impure leaven: "Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump?" And it is the opinion of Dr. Owen, in his treatise upon schism, that whenever a visible church comes to that pass, that she will not, or cannot, purge herself of notorious and evident scandals, she, in that case, is to be departed from; and the reason is, because she has lost or cast away the keys of the kingdom, committed to her by her great King, and then error and scandal run without control, till the whole mass be defiled.

7. Christ, as King of his visible church, has authorized the officers of his kingdom to meet in a judicative capacity, in his name and authority, for the better and joint regulating of the affairs of his kingdom. I cannot now stand to illustrate this head; it is done to excellent purpose by the Westminster Assembly, and approved by the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in the year 1645, bound in with our Confession of Faith, entitled, The Form of Presbyterial Church government; to which I refer.

8. Christ by his authority, as King of Zion, has bounded and limited all the courts and officers of his kingdom, to govern his subjects, and to teach them no other thing than he has commanded, Matth. xxviii. 19, 20: "Teaching them to

observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you." So that if the officers, or courts of Christ's kingdom, begin to "teach for doctrines the commandments of men," or to impose any laws upon his subjects than what Christ has given, they have good reason to ask, By what authority such or such things are done? and to disregard all such laws or impositions.

9. Christ, as King of Zion, has given express orders to all his subjects, to examine all spirits, all doctrines, all laws and impositions, at the bar of the word, and to contend earnestly for the purity of his truth and worship, ordinances and institutions; Jude 3: "Contend earnestly for the faith delivered unto the saints." Where it is worthy of consideration, that the keeping of the truth and purity of doctrine, is not simply committed to ministers, or officers of his house, but to *saints;* that is, to the whole visible church; it is a trust for which they are to be accountable, if, through their neglect, *it fall in the streets;* therefore commanded to *contend earnestly* for it. And, as for Christian liberty, they are to do the same, as is plain from Gal. v. 1: "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free, that you be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." In these things every subject of Christ is to be a soldier.

10. Christ acts as King of Zion, when he resents injuries done to his kingdom or subjects, and sent and called officers. Sometimes the King of Zion has resented visible injuries done to his visible church, in a very open and visible manner; he "makes Jerusalem a burdensome stone unto her enemies," Zech. xii. 3: and, ver. 2, he "makes Jerusalem a cup of trembling unto all the people round about:" for the injuries done to Jerusalem God pulls down the nobles of Babylon, and dashes the Babylonish empire in pieces. So, for his true and loyal subjects, he gives a charge to the world, to beware of offending them, or doing them hurt; for, says he, "it were better for them," that do it, "that a millstone were hanged about their necks, and they cast into the midst of the sea." And as for the ministers and office-bearers, he says, "Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm." They that receive them, coming in their Master's name, receive himself, and his Father; and they that despise them, despise him, and he that sent him. The sound of their King's feet is behind them, when going his errands, Matth. xxviii. 20: "Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." And it is our hearty prayer to God, that none who slight or despise us may fall under the resentment of our great and glorious King, but that his mercy may speedily prevent it by their repentance.

11. Christ, as King of Zion, removes his royal standard from one people or nation to another. When a people have long enjoyed the gospel, and the ordinances of his worship, and continue barren under them, and slight his ordinances, officers, and laws, in that case, by his royal authority, he translates the seat of his visible kingdom, and the badges of his presence, elsewhere: hence Christ tells the Jews, that his kingdom was to be taken from them, and given to a people that would make better use of it. So dealt he with the churches of the Lesser Asia; so has he dealt with many famous and once flourishing churches; to this purpose is what you read concerning "the vineyard of the Lord of hosts, the house of Israel," Is. v. Thus, I have given you an account of some of the royal acts of the King of Zion, with respect to his church as she is a visible society of men and women, professing allegiance to him.

I shall conclude this head of Christ's royal administration, as King of Zion, by giving you an account of some of his royal and kingly acts at the end of the world, when his mystical body is consummated and perfected. As,

1. He will then "descend from heaven," in an awful manner, "with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God." And when he comes he will "shake heaven and earth:" 2 Pet. iii. 10—12: "The day of the Lord cometh as a thief in the night, in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, the earth also, and the works that are therein, shall be burnt up," &c. His kingdom will then come with observation to all the world: Rev. i. 7: "Behold he cometh with clouds, and every eye shall see him."

2. He will erect his throne of judgment in the clouds, or visible heavens. O how awful will the bench of judgment be, when he takes his seat! Dan. vii. And,

3. He will raise the dead: "All that sleep in the grave shall come forth," Dan. xii. 2, &c. Not an infant of a span long, that was ever endowed with a rational soul, shall be left behind in the grave.

4. He will gather all nations to him, and make a separation between the righteous and the wicked, setting the one upon his left hand, and the other on his right hand.

5. There will be a public trial of all persons, and of all their actions; "he will bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil." All the laws and acts of kings, of parliaments, of councils, of assemblies, of judicatories of whatever sort, will then be canvassed by the solemn Judge, &c.

6. He will distribute rewards and punishments to men

and women, according to what they are found to be at that day, righteous or wicked, gracious or graceless, building on the rock, or on the sand: he will say to the one, "Come, ye blessed of my Father; inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," &c.; he will say to the other, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels," &c.

When all is done, he and his ransomed will return in triumph to heaven with singing, when the wicked shall be turned into hell with howlings, crying, "Lord, Lord, have we not eaten and drunk" at thy table? "have we not prophesied in thy name?" &c.; and then Christ will have all his enemies under his feet, and reign over his mystical body for ever. It is true, we are told, that Christ will "deliver up the kingdom to his Father;" but this is to be understood of his presenting the ransomed to his Father, saying, "Here am I, and the children thou hast given me:" and he will, indeed, cease to rule them in that manner which he exercises in the church militant; but Christ will still be the head of the ransomed in mount Zion above; but though it be so, "God will be all in all;" for the design of his whole mediation and government, was to bring them back to God, as their only all, from whom they had departed in the first Adam.

And thus I have given some lame account of the royal administration of the King of Zion, until "the restitution of all things." And so much for the *second* thing in the general method, which was, to speak of the kingdom and administration of Christ in his holy hill of Zion.

III. The *third* thing in the general method was, *Why God the Father has set and ordained him to be King in Zion?* I answer in the two or three particulars following:—

1. This flows originally from the sovereign love and good pleasure of God: "Even so, Father; for so it seemeth good in thy sight." "God so loved the world, as to send his only begotten Son into the world;" and God so loved his church, that he gave the true King Solomon to be her King.

2. Because it was for the Father's glory and honour, to set him upon the throne. None so fit to be his Father's viceroy, and to manifest his glory, as he, who is "the brightness of his Father's glory:" all the divine perfections shine in his person and administration. This the angels saw, when they saw him but in his swaddling clothes, which made them sing, "Glory to God in the highest, peace on earth, and good will towards men."

3. That he might bring about salvation to his mystical body the church: Eph. i.; "He hath given him to be the head

over all things to the church, which is his body:" hence the church is called (Zech. ix. 9,) to *rejoice*, because her "King cometh, having salvation;" and the church cries, "Thou art my King of old, working manifold salvation in the midst of the earth:" salvation from sin, Satan, hell, and death. How soon would the church be swallowed up, if it were not for the safety she enjoys through the protection of her King! "The Lord is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved." His presence in his church is her walls and bulwarks, and makes her to sing that song, Is. xxvi. 1: "We have a strong city, salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks."

4. Because his shoulders were only able to bear the weight of the government. No hand was able to sway the sceptre, but he who was God's "fellow," and to whom it is "no robbery to be equal with God." The government would have fallen into confusion and disorder, had it been committed either to angels or archangels.

5. He bought the church to himself, with the price of his blood, from the hand of justice; and therefore it was fit that the government of the church should be committed to him. And indeed his royal or kingly office, is founded upon the sacerdotal or priestly office: and therefore, Is. lxiii., at the beginning, the King of Zion is there represented as "coming from Edom with dyed garments, and red in his apparel, as one that treadeth in the wine-fat." And, Rev. xix., he who hath that great name written on his thigh, and on his vesture, "The Word of God, the King of kings, and Lord of lords," is said to have his "vesture dipped in blood," namely, his own blood, and the blood of his enemies. But I do not insist farther upon the reasons of the doctrine, that I may shut up with some farther application.

IV. The *fourth* head in the method was the *Application*. And, waving all other uses, I shall only apply it by way of exhortation, 1. To the subjects; 2. To the enemies of his kingdom and government.

First, A word of exhortation to all those that profess themselves the subjects of Christ's kingdom.

1. Imitate your King. The example of a King has great weight with the subjects, whether it be good or bad; folk follow the fashions of the court. Never was there a king so worthy of your imitation; he calls us to "learn of him;" he has left us an example, that we should follow his steps;" an example of holiness; "Be ye holy, as he is holy," &c: an example of faith and trust under the darkest clouds; Psal. xxii. 1, &c.: an example of meekness and humility of spirit; "Learn of me, for I am meek and lowly." Phil. ii. 5;

"Let the same mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus." An example of patience in affliction and persecution; Heb. xii. 2: "Let us run the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus," &c.; an example of constancy and resolution; he "set his face like a flint."

2. I exhort all the professed subjects of Zion's King to "trust in him at all times; for blessed are all they that trust in him," as you see in the last verse of this psalm. Trust him with your all, and trust him for all you need. And, to encourage your trust, consider, (1.) His word is the word of a King, a royal word, and the subjects depend upon the royal promise. (2.) His word is the word of the King of Zion, is a well advised word, it is the effect of counsel. (3.) It is an invariable word; it "endures for ever." "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but one jot of his word shall not fall to the ground." (4.) It is a faithful word; "truth is the girdle of his loins," it is "established in the heavens." (5.) It is a tried word; "The word of the Lord is tried like silver in a furnace;" it abides trial. All the saints in heaven tried it, and found it firm; and therefore let all saints on earth trust it. (6.) This puts honour upon your King, to trust his word, to set to the seal that he is true. (7.) This is the way to obtain the promise, and the blessings promised in the covenant.

3. I exhort you to be much at your King's throne as supplicants; for you have continued business there. Consider, (1.) His throne is a throne of grace, calculated for the poor and needy. (2.) There comes a joyful sound out from his throne; "Whosoever will let him come." "Ask, and ye shall receive." "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God," &c. (3.) There are rivers of grace flow out of his throne, and bend their course toward you. (4.) There is a rainbow about his throne, the covenant of grace and promise, Rev. iv. 3, which alludes to God's covenant with Noah. (5.) Acts and interlocutors of grace are passed from the throne, to encourage your approach; "I will be their God, I will give them a new heart," &c. (6.) The King's throne of grace is founded on justice and judgment. (7.) His throne and administration stand by bounty and liberality; and therefore can never be exhausted, no more than the sun loses by giving light to the world; and therefore, I say, be much about your King's throne; come when you will, or for what you will, you are always welcome: "In every thing by prayer and supplication make your requests known unto God," &c.

4. I exhort you to rejoice in your King. "Let the children of Zion be joyful in their King." "The Lord reigns, let the earth rejoice." "Rejoice, O daughter of Zion, behold

thy King cometh." (1.) Rejoice in his person; for "he is altogether lovely;" his person is the joy and admiration of heaven and earth. (2.) Rejoice in his government and administration; for it is wholly calculated for your good. (3.) Rejoice in his equity; for he rules in righteousness, whatever seeming crooks may be in his administration. (4.) Rejoice in the power and authority of your King; for he hath all power in heaven and earth; things in heaven, earth, and under the earth, bow to him. (5.) Rejoice in the law-magnifying righteousness, that your king has brought in by his obedience to death. (6.) Rejoice in the fulness and riches of your King; for "all the fulness of the Godhead," "unsearchable riches are in him." (7.) Rejoice in the bounty and liberality of your King; he will do for you "above what you can ask or think." (8.) Rejoice in the love of your King; for it is unchangeable; he "rests in his love, and changes not."

5. Obey your King's laws: have a regard to all his commandments; for all his commandments are "holy, just, and good." *Motive*, (1.) He has obeyed the law himself, in the days of his humiliation; he wore the yoke that it might not gall you. (2.) There is great peace in the way of obedience: "Great peace have all they that love his commandments." "As many as walk according to this rule, peace shall be upon them." (3.) A great reward in keeping his commandments; for "he meeteth them that rejoice to work righteousness." (4.) Hereby you will glorify your King, and commend him to others; Matth. v. 16: "Let your light so shine before men," &c. (5.) There is great danger in breaking his laws, he will resent it, and "visit your transgressions with the rod, and your iniquities with stripes."

Quest. What sort of obedience should we yield to the laws of the King of Zion? *Answ.* (1.) A willing and cheerful obedience, such as he yielded to his Father, when he said, "Lo, I come: I delight to do thy will." (2.) Universal obedience to all his commands, not picking and choosing, obeying one and casting out another: "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect to all thy commandments." (3.) An inward as well as an outward obedience: "I delight in the law of the Lord after the inner man." Obedience, when it is not with the heart, is nauseous to the King of Zion, who "searcheth the hearts;" his laws reach the inward, as well as the outward man." (4.) A disinterested obedience, self-denied, reckoning yourselves "unprofitable servants, when you have done all;" do not think that your King is in your debt for your obedience and service, &c. (5.) It must "be the obedience of faith;" for "without that it is impossible to

please God." A faith in the promise, uniting the soul to God, is the foundation of all true obedience to Christ, or God in him. (6.) A constant and steadfast obedience; not by fits or starts, but continually: 1 Cor. xv. 58: "Be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord."

6. Yield not only an active, but a passive obedience to the King of Zion, so as to submit to his disposing will, even when his administrations run contrary to your worldly interest and inclination. When he sends the rod of affliction, consider, (1.) That adverse dispensations are for your good, &c. Many advantages rise out of afflictions. (2.) "He will not keep his anger for ever." (3.) This is the spirit and temper of his true subjects, to be "dumb with silence" when he afflicts. (4.) Consider how submissive he was to his Father's heavy afflicting hand, yea, avenging hand, &c. (5.) Your "light afflictions work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

7. I exhort all the subjects of the King of Zion to keep the King's courts, I mean his ordinances for worship. David, though he was a great king, yet we find, Psal. lxxxiv. he made conscience of attending the tabernacles of the King of Zion, and reckoned it his honour so to do; and when driven from the place of public worship, through the persecution of Saul, or Absalom's rebellion, he envies the happiness of the very swallows or sparrows, which were allowed to nestle about the sanctuary, while he was driven away from it, and had not access to attend his Lord and King there, Psal. lxxxiv. 1, 2, 10, &c. What shall we think of those, who have the doors of the sanctuary of the King opened, the ordinances of the New Testament dispensed at their door; and yet either through pride, or heart-contempt of the ordinances, or love to the world, or sloth, or other carnal causes or pretences, turn their back on the courts of the great King; and yet take it in very ill part, if ministers tell them they do not act the part of loyal subjects to Zion's King? Is it to be supposed, that people ever opened their hearts to him, who contemn and disregard his institutions, where he has required his subjects to attend upon him, and do him homage? They may fancy they are his subjects as well as others, but they have reason to fear, that the day is coming, when the King of Zion will say to them, or of them, "Bring forth those mine enemies, who would not that I should rule over them, and slay them before me." See what became of those men who were bidden to the supper, when all things were made ready, and yet excused themselves from attending, with these and

the other pretences. In Luke xiv. 24, the Lord declares, that "none of those that were called," and refused (whatever were their pretences,) "should taste of his supper."

But to return: I say, let all that love Christ, the exalted King of Zion, attend carefully upon his royal courts and ordinances for worship, whether it be upon Sabbath day, or week day, particularly public preaching, public prayer and praise, and the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the supper, solemn occasions for fasting, prayer, and humiliation. In these, or the like ordinances of the King of Zion, it is that he allows his subjects sweet interviews with himself; "the King is held in these galleries;" there it is that the King intimates his mind and will to the subjects; there his precepts, promises, and doctrines, are published; and there it is that he drops such words of grace and love into their hearts, as makes their hearts to burn within them, &c.; there they are made to say, "His word quickened me, and made my soul like the chariots of a willing people;" there King Solomon shows himself with the crown upon his head, before the daughters of Zion; there the King covers a table of "fat things, and makes them to sit down under his shadow with great delight;" there sometimes they get the secrets of their hearts told them, and the secrets of his covenant, and the secrets of providence also opened, as David when he went into the sanctuary, Psal. lxxiii. And, therefore, I say, attend the King's courts for worship.

8. Let all the subjects of the King of Zion stand up for the honour of their King, especially in a day when numerous indignities are done to his royal authority. I had occasion already to show, in several particulars, what open indignities are done to him among us; his laws are counteracted both by civil and ecclesiastical authority, the liberties of his subjects are invaded, his Sabbaths are profaned, his professed ambassadors throwing up their Master's sovereignty and alone headship in his church, and yet sustained by others, that have not gone their length, as fellow-members in judicatories, without any censure or testimony. There seems to be a saying *a confederacy* with open and avowed traitors to the royal crown of Zion's King, by a deep silence and sinful association with his enemies. I am afraid Christ is saying at this day, These are the wounds whereby they have wounded me in the house of my friends: I am wounded in my truths, in my members, in my prerogatives, as the supreme God, and the supreme King of my church; and yet no due testimony or resentment shown against these wounds and injuries I have received. I am afraid Zion's King is on his way to "wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of them that

are going on in their trespasses." But, while others are injuring and affronting the King of Zion, let all that would be found among his loyal subjects study to put honour upon him. *Quest.* How should we do this? *Answ.* (1.) We should put honour upon him, by believing in him, and trusting in him, particularly in his kingly office; trust that he will rule and defend his subjects, and that he will restrain all his and his people's enemies. Oh, sirs, he never erred in his administration; and therefore whatever seeming confusions may cast up, yet trust that the wheel in his hand shall cast up such a glory to himself, and such good to his subjects, as that it shall be said of Jacob, and of Israel, "What hath God wrought!" (2.) Let us put honour upon him, by confessing him with the mouth; Rom. x. 10: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." This is a day wherein the devil and his emissaries have laid a plot for banishing any profession of Christ and religion. I condemn, as much as any, a hypocritical profession of Christ and Christianity; but let us not cast away our King's livery, because a secret enemy may put it on, and mingle in among his loyal subjects. (3.) Let us put honour upon him, by a conscientious regard to all his laws and commandments, "Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy commandments:" and while others are breaking his bonds, and casting away his cords from them, let us say with Joshua, "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." (4.) By witnessing for him and his cause in our sphere, and by owning a testimony for him when it is lifted up. The standard of Christ, particularly in Scotland, is a covenanted standard and testimony; and whenever Christ's covenanted standard and testimony is lifted up, we are obliged, by the oath of God, to own it, and cleave to it; and it is not this or the other pretence of order, that will dissolve the obligation of the oath of God. (5.) By avoiding the fellowship and society of those who are the known enemies to the King of Zion, and his cause and interest, whatever be their pretences of friendship: "O, my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united," &c. It is dangerous to stay in the camp where there is a mutiny and conspiracy against the King and his kingdom, especially when the King's standard is lifted up without it, and the cry given, "Who is on the Lord's side?" When judicatories of the church are bending their force to slay the witnesses, and to cast them out of the city, it is time for any that profess friendship to Christ, and own him as their King, to inquire where they are, or where they stand. (6.) By suffering for him, through grace, when called, as he suffered for us.

9. Another word of exhortation to the subjects of the King of Zion, is, to act the part of faithful soldiers in fighting your King's battles, against sin, Satan, and the world. Fight against sin: this is the grand enemy that Christ came to destroy, and make an end of. Wage war against Satan; for Christ came to bruise his head: "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you." Wage war against the world; for "the friendship of this world is enmity against God;" the world was an enemy to Christ, and it will be an enemy to his cause, work, and testimony, to the end. These are the enemies with whom you are to enter the lists. *Motive* (1.) He has fought your battles; he entered the lists with sin, Satan, and the world, yea, with the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, to the dyeing of his garments, and the pouring out of his soul unto death. (2.) Your King has gained the victory; he has broken and routed the enemy, and is wearing the victorious palm, &c. (3.) His victory is yours in law, by virtue of the legal and mystical union betwixt you and him; and therefore he calls all his friends to rejoice, and take up the spoils of his victory as their own: hence the apostle cries, "Thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ." (4.) Your King, who is also your leader and commander, has given command to "fight the good fight of faith, to stand fast, to quit yourselves like men, and to be strong." All the subjects of Christ are soldiers, while in the church militant, and required to "contend for the faith," to "resist even unto blood, striving against sin." (5.) Your King is a spectator of your behaviour in the field of battle, and sees who act as cowards in his cause, and who act the part of valiant soldiers. (6.) Your King is ready to succour you, when the battle is hot, and when you are like to be worsted: "Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God." The Lord stood by Paul, when all men forsook him. (7.) Your King will sound the retreat in a little time, and call you off the field, to triumph with him in glory: for "if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him; your light afflictions *and combats*, which are but for a moment, work for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

I conclude this branch of the exhortation with a few advices:—If you would fight the battles of the King of Zion, (1.) Be sure to have his kingdom and authority established within you, and study to have every thought brought into captivity to the obedience of the King of Zion, and beware of harbouring any traitor in your own bosom. Can ever that man fight the open battles with the external enemies of the King of Zion, who is saying *a confederacy* with sin in his bo-

som? And, therefore, give daily battle to indwelling sin, a "body of sin and death," and "take heed, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief," turning you aside "from the living God." (2.) You must make use of your King's armory, and the weapons of his providing and appointing, if you would fight his battles; what these are, see Eph. vi. 13, 14, &c. "Above all, taking the shield of faith," &c. (3.) Keep within sight of your royal King. As we must run our race, so we must fight our battles, "looking unto Jesus." A sight of the King of Zion, inspires the soldiers with courage and greatness of spirit: "They looked unto him, and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed." "Consider him who endured the contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds." (4.) Carry the blood of your King continually along with you, in the hand of faith, especially in the day of battle; for the enemy flies at the sight of it: Rev. xii. 11: "They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb," &c. (5.) In the time of open war study to know and keep the camp of the King of Zion, and beware of the camp of the enemy. That is a question we would gladly be solved of, Where is the King's camp? for some are saying, in our divided day, "Lo, it is here," and others, "Lo, it is there;" will you tell us "where he feedeth, where he maketh his flocks to rest?" Answer, negatively, it is not always where stands the greatest multitude; for Christ's flock is but a *little flock*. In the days of Elijah it was among seven thousand. It is not always with a body of men calling themselves the church of Christ, enjoying the protection of law, and civil authority on their side; for we have heard and seen the day when Popery and Prelacy had the law of the land, and civil authority for them.

Quest. How then may the camp of the King of Zion be known?

Answ. (1.) The King's camp is where the King's standard is upheld, not where it is pulled down. Where is "the testimony of Jesus," the covenanted testimony of Scotland? Whoever they be that are holding the doctrine, worship, discipline, and government of his house, in their purity, there is the King's camp. (2.) The King's camp is where his flock is gathered, and not where they are scattered, borne down, and oppressed. (3.) The King's camp is where his glory is most displayed, and not where his glory is darkened and obscured. (4.) The King's camp is where the smell of his garments gladdens the hearts of his subjects, Psal. xlv. &c. (5.) The King's camp may be known by the current of the flood of the old serpent's malice: Rev. xii. 15, 17: there we read

that "the serpent cast out of his mouth waters as a flood, after the woman;" that is, the devil raised a storm of persecution and trouble against the church of Christ, represented by the woman, and, ver. 17: "The dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ." So, then, if you would know where is the camp of the King of Zion, where his standard is; you may observe where the weapons of hell are levelled, malice; reproach, persecution of hand or tongue; for there is the camp of Christ, for he "fights neither against small nor great, but against the King of Israel," and his seed and interest.

10. A tenth word of exhortation to the subjects of the King of Zion, is, to rejoice in the hope of his heavenly kingdom; for ere it be long, thy King, O believer, will call thee out of the church militant to the church triumphant; and therefore "rejoice in the hope of the glory of God." And, to excite your joy, and quicken your longings after the heavenly kingdom, where the King of Zion is in person, I will tell you of a few things of which you shall then be freed, which are grievous and heavy to you while in the church militant on earth. (1.) Freed of all the necessities of nature. No need of food when dismantled of the body of clay; and when it is raised again it will be a *spiritual body;* they do not eat and drink, &c. No need of clothing to cover the shame of your nakedness: for they shall not only be like the bodies of Adam and Eve, but like Christ's glorious body. No need of armour; for then there shall be no enemy. No need of sleep; for "there will be no night there." So, then, (2.) Freed from all imperfections, both of soul and body. The infirmities of the body are left in the grave; and, as for the soul, it is made perfect in holiness; "that which is in part, shall be done away." (3.) Freed from all your toil and labour: Rev. xiv. 13: "They rest from their labours;" their work shall be their element, like the singing of the bird, which is its pleasure. (4.) Freed from all sorrow: Rev. xxi. 4: "There shall be no more sorrow. We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." (5.) Freed from all temptations. The poisoned arrows of the enemy do not touch the inhabitants of the church triumphant; he is cast out; "no lion to hurt," &c. (6.) Freed from all vexing and carking cares, by which you are now tortured. Care wastes the spirits, and always eats out the comforts of our life here;" but no such thing in the church triumphant; no fear, and therefore no care: no fear of want where all things will be enjoyed. (7.) Freed of all doubts of the love of God; none saying, "Where is thy former loving-kind-

ness?" You shall be in the embraces of your King for ever, wrapt up in his arms and bosom. (8.) Freed of the society of the wicked world. Christ's lily is now among the thorns, but in the church triumphant there is no more pricking briers in all God's field; Christ will "thoroughly purge his floor." (9.) Freed from all divisions. The saddest thing in the church militant is the divisions among those that are really gracious. The divisions between godly and wicked are not so afflicting as the divisions among saints. But this shall be done away then; then they will be all one in the Lord, and all their jealousies and censures of one another will end. (10.) Freed of all distraction and wandering of spirit in the worship of God; now the heart will be fixed on God for ever. Let these things excite you to long for the day-break of everlasting vision above.

Quest. What security have we, while in the church militant, that we shall come to the church triumphant, where the King of Zion is in person?

Answ. (1.) God has ordained it for you, as you see Matth. xxv. ult. &c. (2.) The promise of God, which is "yea and amen in Christ," secures it, Luke xii. 32, &c. and xxii. 29, &c. (3.) Your King has purchased it for you; Eph. i. 14: a "purchased possession." (4.) Your King, who is also your Intercessor, has prayed for it, John xvii. 24, &c. (5.) Your King has taken possession of it for you, John xiv. 2: "I go to prepare a place for you." (6.) Your King has given you the earnest of it; his kingdom within you says you are come to his kingdom above; the first-fruits of the Spirit assures you of the full vintage. (7.) Your union with the King of Zion secures it; the glory of his natural body is a presage of the glory of his mystical body. (8.) A goodly company are already arrived, "an innumerable company of the first-born," and therefore the rest shall follow; therefore "look up, and lift up your heads, for your redemption draweth nigh."

I proceed now to offer a word of exhortation to the *second* sort of persons I named, and that is to you who are yet strangers to Zion's King, and enemies to his kingdom and government. I already gave you the character and marks both of his friends and enemies. In a few words, to clear the matter to you;—all who are yet in a state of nature, and never felt the efficacy of the grace of God in a work of regeneration, are among the enemies of Zion's King; for the carnal mind is enmity against God." All who never felt the power of Christ's prophetical office executed upon them in a work of illumination, opening the eyes of their understanding to know Christ in his person, natures, offices, and undertaking, and to know

the mind and will of God revealed in the word. All who are "ignorant of the righteousness of God, and go about to establish their own righteousness," I mean all legalists, who are cleaving to the law as a covenant, and have not "submitted to the righteousness of JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU," are yet enemies to the kingdom and government of Zion's King; never any in reality, submitted to his laws and government, who did not first submit to his righteousness. All who sit under the drop of the gospel, and have a Saviour and his whole salvation brought near to them, and yet continue to reject him and his salvation through unbelief, Christ will hold all such as enemies to his kingdom and government: Heb. ii. 3: "How shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation?" They that were invited to the marriage-supper of the King, and yet refused, the King "sends forth his armies, and miserably destroys those wicked men." All Gallios and neutrals in the cause of Christ, who are easy whether the cause of Christ sink or swim, are among his enemies; for "he that gathereth not with us, scattereth abroad: lukewarm Laodiceans, the Lord spews them out of his mouth. All that are combining against the Lord and against his Anointed, and laying their heads and hands together to ruin the kingdom of Christ, a covenanted work of reformation, and with axes and hammers breaking down the carved work of the temple, &c. All profane Esaus, who for a mess of pottage are selling their birth-right as Christians, sacrificing their liberties whereby Christ hath made them free, for any secular or any worldly consideration whatever. All who are, with the serpent, licking up the dust of the earth, and preferring the vanities of this world to things of eternal concern. All who are rejecting his laws as the rule of their obedience, and who are saying, "We ourselves are lords, and will come no more unto thee," and whose practice has this language: "We will not have this man to reign over us." Let him "depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of his ways." I say, you, and all such, are enemies to Zion's King, and strangers to his government.

Now, my exhortation to you, as one of the heralds of the renowned King of Zion, is, to surrender your rebellious arms, and submit to his royal authority: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, that the King of glory may come in."

By way of motive, I need only put you in mind of some things that have already been insisted on; as, 1*st*, Consider the dismal wrath and danger abiding all his enemies. See the use of terror. 2*dly*, Consider what sort of King he is to whom ye are called to submit. See the properties or qualities of Zion's King, spoken to on the first head of doctrine. 3*dly*, Consider

the advantages of his government, spoken to in the use of consolation. *4thly*, Consider how earnest he is with the rebellious sinners, to come in under his rule and administration. (1.) He invites the rebels to submit, Is. lv. 7: "Let the wicked forsake his way," &c. (2.) He beseeches sinners to be reconciled to him, and to God in him, 2 Cor. v. 20. (3.) He promises welcome with the golden sceptre of peace in his hand: "Come to me" who will, "I will in no wise cast out." (4.) He is grieved at the obstinacy of sinners, who will not submit, as in the case of Jerusalem, Luke xix. (5.) He reasons with sinners, and expostulates the matter, Is. i. 18; Jer. ii. (6.) He swears that he has no pleasure in their death and ruin, Ezek. xxxiii. 11: "As I live, I have no pleasure in your death," &c. (7.) When there is no persuading of them, he takes away his kingdom with regret, Matth. xxiii., at the close. (8.) Consider how glad he is when a rebel sinner submits to him, as the father of the prodigal, &c.

I conclude with two or three advices, in order to your becoming his subjects.

1. Be convinced that you are by nature enemies, yea, enmity itself; and do not deceive yourselves, by imagining that you have good hearts toward God: for they are *desperately wicked*.

2. Meditate much on your miserable thraldom and bondage to sin, Satan, and the world, until the Son make you free, &c.

3. Attend carefully on the ordinances of the King of Zion, particularly that great converting ordinance of the preaching of the word; for this is "the rod of his strength, and it pleases him by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;" and listen carefully to hear the voice of the king of Zion in that ordinance, as Lydia, who attended on the ministry of Paul. See Is. lv. 2, 3, &c.

4. With hearing of the word join a diligent reading of it: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and these are they which testify of me." The Bible is God's record concerning him whom he has set King in his holy hill of Zion:" there his glory and beauty are deciphered with his own hand; there you have the will of the King, the latter will of the King sealed with his own blood.

5. Be importunate supplicants at the King's throne for grace and mercy. Zion's King is a merciful King; his work is to "save the poor and needy," Psal. lxxii. &c. He is liberal: "If any man lack wisdom, let him ask of God," &c.

6. In the use of other means, see that you essay the great work of believing; for without this "it is impossible to please" the King, or his eternal Father: "This is his commandment,

that ye believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ." Do what you will, you will be held as rebels till you believe: "He that believeth, shall be saved; but he that believeth not, shall be damned." And therefore, I say, in obedience to the commands of God, and in a dependence on his grace and Spirit, essay the work of believing: "This is the work of God, that ye believe on his Son whom he hath sent."

7. Pray much for the purchased and promised Spirit from the King who is in the midst of the throne; plead the promise, "I will put my Spirit within you," Ezek. xxxvi. 27, and that promise, Psal. cx. 3: "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power."

8. Cast out a red flag of war against all the enemies of the King of Zion, whether within or without you. Begin the war against his enemies in your own hearts, in your walk, and in your families; begin reformation there: and having begun the war within, carry it abroad in your profession; and take up the cause of Christ in the land, his public interest, and do what in you lies to oppose and discountenance those who are attempting to ruin his kingdom and interest in the world, particularly in the land in which you live; for if his kingdom be taken from us, if he remove the doctrine, discipline, worship, and government of his house, wo to our land: then the songs of our temple shall be turned into howlings, and our poor posterity shall, in a few years, be a company of Pagan and Popish idolaters.

Well, then, let me renew my call and invitation to all strangers, foreigners, and rebels, to come and submit to the government of him whom God has set King in his holy hill of Zion. It was foretold by Jacob, on his death-bed, that "the gathering of the people should be to him," and by Isaiah, that "unto him should the Gentiles seek." O that this may be the day and time in which this prophecy shall be fulfilled! This time hundred years, namely, 1638, there was a strange gathering of the whole land to the Lord Jesus, as their glorious Head and King. When his work seemed to be buried, and his friends were reckoning that they were like a company of dry bones, it pleased the Lord to breathe upon the dry bones, by the wind of his Spirit, and presently a great army stood up, and gathered life and strength to fight his battles; insomuch that the whole land, in a little time, was brought under the oath of a covenanted allegiance to the King of Zion; and such a vigorous stand was at that time made for the royalties of his crown, that those very powers then in being, which had been attempting to bury his cause, were obliged to give way to it. Although the kingdom and interest of Christ be brought low at this day, yet let us not lose hopes of its resurrection,

but "remember the years of the right hand of the Most High;" let us "remember the works of the Lord, and his wonders of old: for the residue of the Spirit" is still with him; "his hand is not shortened, that he cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that he cannot hear." A nation can be born to him at once, just by the swaying of his royal sceptre, the sound of his voice in the dispensation of the gospel. O that this may be the hour or year in which the dead through Scotland may hear the voice of the Son of man, and live!

Mean time, I say, I desire, as one of the meanest of his heralds, to invite and call, to entreat and beseech, yea, in his name and authority, I require all hearing me this day, to believe in his name, to trust him for salvation from sin, Satan, wrath, and hell, and to submit to his authority, to receive the law at his mouth, and to own him as their alone Judge, King, and Lawgiver: "Thou art my King of old, working salvation in the midst of the earth."

Object. 1. I have been in rebellion against the King of Zion, he will never show favour to me.

Answ. All Adam's posterity are rebels; and if he did not receive such, he should have no kingdom on earth. But see what is said of Zion's King, Psal. lxviii. 18: "He gave gifts unto men, yea, even to the rebellious." And, therefore, let not this stand in the way; break your covenant with hell, and submit.

Object. 2. My acts of rebellion draw deeper than can be supposed to be forgiven.

Answ. "Though your sins be as scarlet and crimson, he will make them white as snow, and as wool." The King stands with an indemnity in his hand to the greatest of rebels, saying, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out all your transgressions," &c.

Object. 3. I am such a miserable, wretched, and worthless creature, that the King of Zion will never look upon me.

Answ. Though Zion's King be high, yet so condescending is he, that he regards the most worthless and wretched sinner that is out of hell, who will submit to his righteousness and sceptre. His cry is, "He that hath no money, let him come and buy without money, and without price."

Object. 4. I am a poor blind creature, I was born blind, and continue blind, like a mole, to this day, in the things of God; what will the King of Zion care for me?

Answ. The King of Zion "opens the eyes of the blind," and he counsels the blind to come and "buy of him eye-salve."

Object. 5. I am entirely naked of all good qualifications, I have no holiness, no righteousness, no goodness, to recommend me to the King of Zion, as one of his subjects.

Answ. Zion's King calls the naked to come and "buy of him white raiment, to cover the shame of their nakedness." He clothes all his subjects with change of raiment, yea, with the King's own robe; only cast away your own filthy rags, the works of the law, and all qualifications of self, and come to him as you are, for he says, "Come to me" who will, "I will in no wise cast out."

Object. 6. I am so polluted and defiled with the uncleanness of sin, and have followed so many idols, that the King of Zion will never own me.

Answ. Ezek. xxxvi. 25: "I will sprinkle them with clean water, and they shall be clean: from all their filthiness, and from all their idols will I cleanse them." "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold." The King washes the subjects with his own blood, and you shall be made to sing, (Rev. i.) "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood;—to him be glory," &c.

Object. 7. I have a heart of stone like the adamant in my breast; will ever the King of Zion receive me?

Answ. Ezek. xxxvi. 26: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you, and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." The King of Zion cries, "My son, give me thine heart," hard as it is, and I will soften it.

Object. 8. I am unacquainted with the kingdom of the King of Zion, and know nothing of the secrets of his kingdom and government.

Answ. Well, be it so, the King of Zion has "pity on the ignorant, and on them that are out of the way;" he will let you into his secrets, and "to you it shall be given to know the mysteries of the kingdom." Zion's King is also a Prophet to reveal secrets, and his "secret is with them that fear him, and to them he will show his covenant."

Object. 9. I am a stranger to the laws and government of the King, &c.

Answ. He will "write his law in your heart, and put it in your inward parts: I will put my spirit within them, and cause them to walk in my statutes."

Object. 10. If I should own the King of Zion for my King, I will prove a deserter, and turn back again unto the devil's camp, and then my latter end will be worse than my beginning.

Answ. It is the promise of Zion's King to all that believe in him, "I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will never turn away from them to do them good: but I

will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me."

Object. 11. I am a dead sinner; what cares the King of Zion for the dead?

Answ. Zion's King quickens the dead, and commands "things that are not as if they were." His voice raises the dead; and therefore I cry, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee life."

Object 12. What if I be not among those that are given to the King of Zion by his Father? in that case he will never receive me among his subjects.

Answ. That is none of your business, at the first instant to leap in among "things secret," which "belong unto the Lord:" "Things revealed belong unto us, and to our children." The voice of the King of Zion, in his word and ministry, is to you, "Unto you, O men, do I call, and my voice is to the sons of men." And therefore come in upon the King's proclamation, for that is your warrant, and not the secret thoughts of the King's heart.

Object. 13. I am a prisoner to sin and Satan, my bonds are so strong, that I cannot stir myself to come to Zion's King.

Answ. Zion's King comes to prisoners, because they cannot come to him, and says to the prisoners of sin and Satan, *Come forth;* unto you that sit in darkness, *Show yourselves.* It is just the work of the King of Zion to loose prisoners: and therefore submit to him, that he may loose your bands, and "whom the Son makes free, they are free indeed," &c.

SERMON XXXII.

CHRIST THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE.*

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life.—JOHN XI. 25.

THE FIRST SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I HOPE there are a goodly number here, who are come up to the passover from afar, and are uttering the very language of those Greeks you were hearing of, "Sir, we would see Jesus;" this is the one thing we desire, to behold the beauty of Jesus, and if we miss this, we miss our errand. Well, sirs, these words that I have read, I set them up before you as a glass in which you may see Jesus; for every title and name he takes to himself is a glass in which you may see him; and if you can but get the eye of faith set to this glass, you will see Jesus, and see him to your souls' unspeakable advantage: "We all with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord," 2 Cor. iii. 18. What is that glass the apostle speaks of, through which we may see Jesus, who cannot now be seen with the bodily eye, for "the heavens must contain him until the time of the restitution of all things?" Why, it is just his own word and record concerning himself; and here is a part of it, here is a word, a great word, and a comfortable word, look through it, and you shall see him whose name is *Wonderful;* he says to you as directly as he said to Martha, *I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.*

I cannot stand upon the context. The words are a part of that conference between Christ and Martha concerning the resurrection of her brother Lazarus from the dead. Martha, when she heard that Christ was near at hand, ran out of the

* Being the substance of three discourses, preached at the celebration of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper at Burntisland, Oct. 1738.†

† Pardon want of accuracy of style; for the author had scarce time to revise the following notes of his discourses; but because "the wisdom of words" makes the gospel of none effect, he allows them to go as they are. Truth is sweetest in her simplest dress.

town to meet him, and came to him with this melancholy complaint in her mouth: "Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died:" There was weakness in this way of speaking, as if the power of Christ, to save her brother from death, had been confined to Christ's bodily presence: Christ can cure in the absence of his human nature, as well as when he is present. We read of a poor woman that had a bloody issue; she wanted to be at Christ, but had a crowd to pass through before she could win at him, to get a touch of him; but she went through them all, and she steals a cure from Christ. It is true, we cannot get such a touch of him with the hand of the body, now that he is ascended, as she got; but yet he may be touched by faith, as really as this woman touched the hem of his garment. And what if I should tell you, sirs, that Christ is as really present here, as to his divine nature, as he was in his human nature, when he was upon the earth: Christ tells Nicodemus, John iii. 13: "No man hath ascended up to heaven, but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man, which is in heaven." And Christ says also in Matth. xviii. 20, and Exod. xx. 24: "Wheresoever his name is recorded, he is there." And we are met here upon this occasion to record the name of Christ, in word and sacrament; and he is as really present with us now, as he was with Martha. Do not, then, fall into the same mistake that Martha did, who thought that Christ could not save her brother, unless his human nature was present; our Jesus, who is now in heaven at "the right hand of God," is "able to save unto the uttermost, all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them;" and O that this company were coming to a God in Christ this night, it would make a heartsome sacrament to-morrow. —Christ drops a word for the encouragement of Martha's faith; he says, "Thy brother shall rise again," without telling her when. A promise from Christ is the fuel of faith; as fire cannot burn without fuel, so no more can faith live or act without a promise. Martha confesses her faith as to the general resurrection at the last day; she says, "I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day." Well, Christ, from that general truth, leads her faith to fix upon himself as the fountain-cause of the resurrection of the dead in general, and of her brother Lazarus in particular, *I am the resurrection, and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live.*

Where briefly we have these two or three things: 1. We have one of the glorious titles of Christ that should recommend him to dead sinners, *I am the resurrection, and the life.* 2. We have the duty incumbent upon all who would have

benefit by Christ, who is *the resurrection and the life*, and that is, to "believe in him." 3. We have the glorious advantage that shall redound to all who shall believe in him, "Though he were dead, yet shall he live."

As to the *first* of these, and indeed it is only the first of them I have in my view at present, there is a twofold title by which Christ reveals himself to Martha, first *the resurrection*, and then *the life;* but they are so [related] to one another, that it is impossible to form a just idea of the first without the last; for what is resurrection but a recovery of the person back from the state of the dead to the state of the living? so that *the resurrection and the life* are but one complex title. And it is comfortable to think, that this title has a glorious relation to us dead sinners of Adam's family; all the names and offices of Christ are relative; he is a Prophet to us; he is a Priest to us, and he is a King to us; he is "made of God unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption:" so when he is said to be *the resurrection and the life*, he is that to us; for *unto us this son is given, unto us* this *child is born*, whose name is *the resurrection and the life*. Therefore, sirs, let us see if we can fasten the hand of an applying faith upon Christ to ourselves, seeing he is so [related] to us, and his very name points to every man and woman in this company; *I am the resurrection, and the life.* The words themselves are the doctrine.

The method I propose is,

I. To show what is implied in this title Christ takes to himself, *The resurrection, and the life.*

II. I would inquire, of whom he is the resurrection?

III. Of what is he the resurrection?

IV. To what sort of life is he the resurrection?

V. I would inquire how it comes about that he is the resurrection and the life to us?

VI. Why he assumes this title to himself? And then,

VII. *Lastly*, Apply.

I. As to the *first* of these, *What is implied and imported in this title and designation, by which Christ reveals himself to you and me?*

1. Then, It plainly supposes, that all Adam's race are dead men and women. Sirs, no sooner did we take the draught of deadly poison in paradise, but that moment the contagion ran through our first parents' souls, and has run through all of us, their posterity, ever since. We are legally dead; "The soul that sinneth, shall die;" we are spiritually dead, under the power and dominion of sin, separated from God,

who is the very fountain of life; and liable every moment both to temporal and eternal death. Sirs, death has reigned over all Adam's family; and what a clean sweep has death made of all the generations before us? It has just hurled one generation after another to the grave, and hurled the souls of innumerable multitudes into hell; and that same besom of death, that swept away the generation before us, will just sweep us away in a short time. Sirs, where will you and I be in a little time? Alas! the great reason why people do not consider this, is because they are sleeping, and do not consider whether their landing shall be with glorified angels, or reprobate devils, and damned spirits, where the worm of conscience never dies, and the fire is not quenched. Death is executing his office on every one of us; soul-death has seized us, in separating us from God: and bodily death will shortly separate betwixt soul and body,

2. Christ being *the resurrection and the life* plainly implies, that the Son of God was sent into this lower world, to give life to the dead. He got his commission as Mediator from the Father, to quicken the dead; he said to the Son from eternity, Go and give life to these dead sinners. Accordingly, the Son of God, having got his commission, pays them a visit, and says to them, *Life;* he had power to do it, "Thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him," John xvii. 2. And I conceive it was with a view to this, that Christ says, John v. 26: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." There is a twofold life the Son of God has; there is his essential life, considered as God, for he has this essentially from eternity: but then he has a mediatorial life, gifted and bestowed upon him as a second Adam; and that life he has a commission to give to dead sinners of Adam's family; he has "received gifts for men, even for the rebellious:" and this was the leading gift he was to bestow, even everlasting life, and all the appurtenances of it. But again,

3. *I am the resurrection, and the life,* I think plainly implies, that our Lord Jesus Christ has abrogated the sentence of the law, by which we were to die; "The wages of sin is death;" there was the hand-writing that was against us, and was contrary to us. Well, Christ came, and, as it were, by nailing it to his cross, he tears this hand-writing, that it might not stand against us before the tribunal of God. Again,

4. I think it likewise implies, that our Lord Jesus Christ has recovered all that was lost by the first Adam. The first Adam, by his sin and apostacy, became the fountain of wo, death, and misery, to all his posterity, that he is the heritage

we have by our first father Adam; but Christ came and recovered all that we lost in the first Adam: hence there is a comparison made, Rom. v., between the first Adam and his natural seed, and Christ, the second Adam, and his spiritual seed, by whom they are made alive. Again,

5. I think it implies, that Christ himself is risen from the dead, and has carried the keys of hell and of death away with him, by which he is become victorious over hell and death: Rev. i. 17, 18: "I was dead, but now I am alive:—therefore fear not: and I am alive for evermore: and have the keys of hell and of death." And then,

6. In the *last* place, I think it plainly implies, that the life of the whole mystical body is in Christ. Sirs, matters are quite otherwise laid in the second covenant than they were in the first. In the first covenant man's life was in his hand, but now his life is in his Head: man got his life in his hand, and so came of it; he was a mutable creature, though perfectly holy. But blessed be God, that matters are otherwise in the new covenant; God will not give it into our hand, but he has laid it up in the hand of Christ, and there lies the life of the whole mystical body. It may be there are some here complaining and saying, O, I am dead, I am a dry withered tree, my life is gone, and there is no sap nor life in me; I cannot win to that liveliness in duty I had in some months past. O beware lest in this complaint there be not something of a tang of the covenant of works, beware that there be not a legal spirit here: you are dissatisfied, perhaps, that your life is not in your own hand, as in Adam's before he fell; but you would do well to remember, that, since the fall, God puts no trust in man, no, not in his dearest saints, he will not trust them with their own life, but has assured us, by a solemn record, that "this life is in his Son;" and the believer, when himself, will acquiesce in it, that his life is laid up in the hand of Christ, and say, Lord, I am content that my life be "hid with Christ in God," although I should have nothing of it in mine own hand. Sirs, it is a weighty truth, and it is a truth attested by the most famous witnesses, the "three that bear record in heaven," 1 John v. 7, God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; therefore we are to set to our seal to what they say, that it is true, or else we "make him a liar." What is the record of God? "This is the record, that God hath given to us eternal life," to us that were lost, ruined, and condemned; "given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son." If you would have life, you must be content with what life he lets out to you; he is the great Steward, and all the bairns [children] of the family must depend upon him, great and small, Is. xxii. 24: "They shall hang upon him all the glory

of his Father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of smaller and greater quantity, from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons;" they just hang their happiness where God has hung it. And if this be your way this night, and at a communion-table, you will make a noble hand of it; but if you are discontented that Christ is the Steward, unless you get according to your will, depend upon it, you will get a rebuke. Go to him who has your life in his hand, go ask him whatever he has promised in his word. Beware of limiting him; he will give the children of the family what he sees they need; he will not embezzle the goods or bread of the children; no, no, he gives them all their bread *in due season;* and it well becomes all the younger children to depend upon their Elder Brother. So much for the *first* thing.

I should now proceed to the *second* thing I proposed to speak to; but I do not think it proper to detain you from private and secret work betwixt God and you upon a preparation-evening before our Christian passover. You may remember that the Lord's servants, in the former part of the day, were exhorting you to the duty of self-examination; well, I second the exhortation; and one special thing you are to examine, is, Whether you were ever partakers of the first resurrection? whether Christ be the resurrection and the life to you? I shall not multiply particulars, only I shall say, if ever he was the resurrection and the life to your souls, there will be a sweet similitude betwixt Christ's resurrection and your resurrection: and no wonder there be a similitude between them, for Christ rose as the mystical head; for when he revived, we revived. The prophet Hosea, when speaking of the resurrection of the head and members, says chap. vi. 2: "After two days will he revive us, in the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight;" not he, but we; all the mystical members of Christ rose representatively with him. If ye be really risen with him, there will be a similitude between your resurrection and his resurrection on the third day. I shall only clear this in a few particulars.

1. You know Christ rose by his own power, by the power of his own divine nature; he was "declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by his resurrection from the dead." Just so, if ever you were quickened spiritually by him, if you be partakers of his resurrection, if he be the resurrection and the life to you, I am sure you have felt something of "the power of his resurrection;" for it is that very power that must raise you, and make you believe that God raised Christ from the dead, Eph. i. 19. I doubt not of it, yea, I am persuaded, whenever a man is

partaker of Christ, *the resurrection and the life*, he is cured of Arminianism; he will not say, I have a power to repent and to believe, he will acknowledge it is not owing to the power of his own will, but to the power of free, sovereign grace, that has brought him from death to life. Then,

2. Christ, by his resurrection, was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness." God the Father, speaking of his resurrection from the dead, says, in Acts xiii. 33: "Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee:" not as if the generation of the Son commenced at his resurrection; no, no: "Who can declare his generation?" it was from all eternity: an everlasting Father must have an everlasting Son, it is meant of his essential Deity: but his resurrection from the dead "declared him to be the Son of God with power." If ever you have been raised from the dead, your sonship has, in some measure, been declared to you. That moment the new creature is formed, and the babe of grace begins to live, it endeavours to cry, "Abba, Father," to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ;" and, however it is suppressed and smothered with prevailing unbelief, yet whenever faith begins to lift up its head, the language of the new creature is that, Is. lxiii. 16: "Doubtless thou art our Father—thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer, and this thy name is from everlasting." Again,

3. You know when Christ rose from the dead, he entered into his rest, he rested from the toilsome work of man's redemption; the Sabbath is a day of rest, because Christ rested from his great work of redemption. So, sirs, if ever you have been partakers of his resurrection, you have been made to rest in Christ; rest your wearied, burdened souls in him, upon "the foundation God hath laid in Zion." You have been "wearying yourselves in the greatness of your way," to find rest in the works of the law, and other lying refuges, and could never find it; but whenever God's rest was discovered to you, you said, "This is my rest, here will I stay, for I do like it well." Again,

4. You know when Christ rose from the dead, he left his grave-clothes behind him. Christ, when he came out of the grave, left his grave-clothes there, because he was never to die again: Lazarus, when he was raised from the dead, and came out of the grave, he brought his grave-clothes with him, because he was to die again. So, if you be partakers of Christ's resurrection, you have been raised out of the grave of sin, and of a natural state, and you have put off the dead garments, and the vile clothing of sin, you have been made to "deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." "What have I to

do any more with idols?" is the language of the soul that has the life of Christ in it. Again,

5. When Christ rose from the dead, he conversed no more with the graceless Jews; he spent his life with them, and he never owned them after. But perhaps some may ask me, Why Christ did not show himself to the Jewish sanhedrim after his resurrection? Why, he had given them a sufficient evidence of his divine mission in his life; but they rejected him, calling him "a devil, and a wine-bibber, a friend of publicans and sinners," and then crucified him as an impostor; and therefore, when he rose again, he appeared only to his friends, "he was seen of five hundred of them at once, 1 Cor. xv. 6. So those that are partakers of Christ's resurrection, will not frequent the society of the enemies of Christ, a wicked world, but will keep company with the saints, these "excellent ones of the earth." They that are living, do not desire to converse with the dead; so they that are spiritually alive do not love to converse with them that are spiritually dead, unless it be to tell them their hazard and danger, to flee from the wrath to come. You that love the company of swearers and cursers, and cabals of wicked and profane persons, and take pleasure in them, you are dead, otherwise you could not stay in such company; for the society of the dead is a nuisance to the living. Then,

Lastly, Christ, when he rose from the dead, was, I say, on the wing to ascend to heaven; so he says to Mary, John xx. 17, "I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." So, "if ye be risen with Christ," you will not be going down the wilderness, but going upward; you will be "setting your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth."

I conclude with a word of exhortation to dead sinners. O dead sinners! will you come to Christ, *the resurrection and the life!* If we be dead, you may say, to what purpose do you speak to us? can the dead raise themselves to life? I answer, There is a difference between a person's being morally and naturally dead; if ye were naturally dead, our commission were done with you; we do not preach the gospel to those who are naturally dead. It is true, the sinner, dead in sin, is as much unfit for spiritual action, as the man that is naturally dead is incapable of action with the living. But I have a commission to you from God, to cry to the dead to "hear that their souls may live," and upon hearing they *shall live*, Is. lv. 3. "The hour is coming, and now is," says Christ, "when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of man, and shall live." And therefore I cast in this name of Christ among you; I proclaim that he is *the resurrection and*

the life, that dead sinners may hear and live; for in hearing of it by faith, you shall have life; for, says Christ, in the latter part of the verse, "He that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live." But I go no farther at present. The Lord bless his word.

CHRIST THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE.

Jesus saith unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life.—JOHN XI. 25.

THE SECOND SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

I MADE an entry upon these words last night, and after I had divided them a little, I began to speak unto the title that is here given, and that our blessed Lord takes to himself, *I am the resurrection, and the life.* And in discoursing on it, I proposed,

I. In the *first* place, to inquire what may be imported or implied in this title?

II. To whom is he the resurrection?

III. Of what is he the resurrection?

IV. To what life is he the resurrection?

V. What way comes he to be the resurrection? and why does he undertake this province for us? And then,

VI. *Lastly*, To apply the whole.

I only spoke to the first of these, and made some improvement.

I told you, 1. That it supposes and implies, that mankind are dead, dead in law, condemned already by that sentence, "The soul that sinneth, shall die;" and this legal death has brought on spiritual death on the soul; and spiritual death ushers in eternal death, "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord." My friends, I would have you to believe it as a truth, that you are all dead men before God in the first Adam; and I am afraid, that just where you stand at present, there is dead upon dead. There are many dead people lying below you, the dead bodies of men and women that have been swept away into the grave; where their souls

are God knows. But I say, there are many of you that are spiritually dead; and remember, sirs, that you who are sitting there, in a very little [while,] will be lying as low as your ancestors that are now under your feet, "one generation comes, and another goes;" let us consider where all our souls will be throughout eternity. But then,

2. I told, that this title, *I am the resurrection and the life*, implies, that Christ was sent into this world to give life to the dead; hence he declares, he "came to seek and to save them which were lost." Again,

3. *I am the resurrection and the life*, implies, that Christ, according to his commission from the Father, has abrogated, or abolished the hand-writing or sentence of death that was on sinners of Adam's family. Nothing could be done for our resurrection to life, either spiritual or eternal, until the sentence of the law was cancelled; and this he does by "nailing it to his cross:" he tears the obligation, destroys and discharges the debts and bands that were over our heads. And then,

4. *I am the resurrection, and the life*, plainly implies, that the life which was lost in the first Adam, is again recovered by Christ, the second Adam. O this is glad tidings of great joy. "I live," says the second Adam; "and because I live, ye shall live also:" As in Adam all" (his natural posterity) "died, so in the second Adam all" (his spiritual offspring) "are made alive." And then,

5. It implies, that Christ himself has surmounted and vanquished death: *I am the resurrection, and the life:* I am going down to the grave, and I will there spoil death of its sting and terror. Accordingly, he "ransomed us from the power of the grave, and he redeemed us from the power of death;" and says, "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction; and repentance shall be hid from mine eyes:" I have said it, and I will do it, and I will never rue my undertaking. And then,

Lastly, It implies, that the life of the whole mystical body lies in his hand, and every thing that pertains to it: "Our life is hid with Christ in God;" it is not hid in Adam, but it is hid in Christ: "This is the record of God, that he hath given to us eternal life; and this life is in his Son."

II. But now I proceed to the *second* general head that I proposed in the prosecution of this subject, and that was, to *inquire to whom or of whom Christ is the resurrection and the life?* To this I answer in the following five or six particulars:—

1. In the *first* place, he is not the resurrection and the life

of the fallen angels, but he is the resurrection and the life of fallen and slain sinners of Adam's family: Heb. ii. 16: "He took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Sirs, when man complied with the tempter in paradise, and eat of the forbidden fruit, the curse and wrath of God was about to sweep Adam and all his posterity into the same state of condemnation and misery with the angels that fell. But what method does God take to prevent this? Why, he joins a piece of the human nature to the person of his eternal Son, and, by that bit of the human nature, he brings back fallen man from ruin; this is what is intimated, John iii. 16: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life." He gave him to be man, and he gave him to die: "He spared not his own Son, but gave him unto the death for us;" he gave him to the world, that is to say, he gave him not to angel-kind, but unto mankind sinners. Sirs, here is matter of great joy and triumph, that Christ has taken hold of our nature, and let the angelic nature drop, at least an innumerable multitude of them. But then,

2. Christ is not only "the resurrection and the life" of the Jewish nation, but of the Gentile nations that were afar off. The Jews imagined that the Messiah was to confine his blessings only to their nation, they imagined he was to be their Saviour and their Redeemer only; and therefore we find, after the resurrection of Christ, when the apostles began to preach to the Gentiles, great offence was taken at it by the Jews. Christ "preached unto the Gentiles," is a branch of the "great mystery of godliness." Well, sirs, Christ is given as *the resurrection and the life* to the Gentile nations, as well as to the Jews; there is a prophecy to this purpose in the prophecies of Isaiah, chap. xlix. 6, says JEHOVAH, in the person of the Father to our Redeemer, "It is a light thing that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth;" that is, it is but a trifle between thee and me: no, "I will give thee for a light to the Gentiles," &c. The apostle John, I remember, has a word that points this way also, in his first epistle, chap. ii. 1, 2: "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world:" not for us that are Jews only, but for the sins of the poor Gentiles also; they have an interest in the redemption that the Son of God hath purchased. Again,

3. Christ is the resurrection of all the churches; he is the resurrection of the church, both catholic and particular; there had never been a church in Adam's family, if he had not gathered it. He began to raise a church in paradise, and the foundation of the church was laid in the first promise; "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent." The church is God's family upon earth, and it is Christ that builds the family, and that builds the house of mercy in which the family dwells. He received furniture from his Father to build a new family among the tribes of Adam: Psal. lxviii. 18: "When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive: he received gifts for men, even for the rebellious;" for what end? "That the Lord God might dwell among us." So that he is the resurrection and the builder of the churches. The Jewish church received its very being from him, and he raised them up out of nothing, out of the dunghill, when they were among the Amorites and the Hittites, why, he gathers them, as in Ezek. xvi. 3—6: "Thus saith the Lord God unto Jerusalem, Thy birth and thy nativity is of the land of Canaan; thy father was an Amorite, and thy mother a Hittite. And as for thy nativity in the day thou wast born (he speaks directly to the Jewish church,) thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee: thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live: yea, I said unto thee, when thou wast in thy blood, Live." It was he that raised them up out of the house of bondage, as he tells them in the preface to the ten commandments; it was he that raised them out of Babylon; it was just like a grave to them, and it seemed as impracticable to bring them back to their own land again, as to bring up one lying in the grave to life; yet the Lord raises them out of their Babylonish grave, and plants and waters them there. Again,

4. Christ is "the resurrection and the life" of every sinner that belongs to him, in a day of conversion and regeneration: Eph. ii. 1: "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Sirs, in a day of power, the Lord comes to the grave in which we lie buried, the grave of sin and misery, just as he came to Lazarus's grave, and he says, Sinner, *come forth*, and immediately he gets life, the Spirit of Jesus enters into him; then the fetters of his spiritual captivity drop off. And then,

5. *Lastly*, Christ is the resurrection and the life of languishing believers. Many times the real believer that is quickened by the Spirit of the Lord, falls back, in a great measure, into spiritual death, to his sense and feeling; he is "free among the dead," as Heman says of himself, Psal. lxxxviii. 5; that is to say, I am a burgess among the generation of the dead: my life is gone, as the eunuch, Is. lvi. 3; "Behold, I am a dry tree," my life is gone, there is no sap in me, there is no life in me. Well, I am ready to apprehend, there may be many of the Lord's people here, and up and down the land, that have this complaint in their mouth; but Christ is *the resurrection and the life;* he lets out new streams of life to languishing souls, to restore them again, as David says, Psal. xxiii. 3: "He hath restored my soul to life again." What way does he that? He makes the dew of his life-giving Spirit descend, and then the man "revives as the corn, grows as the vine, and his scent is as the wine of Lebanon." And thus you see an answer to the *second* question, Of whom is Christ the resurrection and the life?

III. I proceed now to the *third* thing I proposed, and that was, to *inquire of what is he the resurrection and the life?* to this I answer in the following particulars:—

1. Christ is the resurrection of the declarative glory of God in this lower world. Sirs, God's declarative glory was marred by man's sin: his essential glory cannot be marred by men nor devils, let them do their utmost; but, I say, his declarative glory was marred. When man sinned, he threw off God as his Sovereign: he, upon the matter, said, with proud Pharaoh, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey him?" He swore allegiance to hell, in opposition to God, the glory of his justice and holiness, and all his perfections, particularly his truth. All these perfections of God were sullied and stained; there was a blot cast upon them, as far as man was able. Well, but Christ came to wipe away the dust that was cast upon them by man; and, accordingly, he raises them to a greater splendour than if man had not sinned: hence he is called, "The brightness of the Father's glory, and the express image of his person."—"Father," says he, "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And therefore, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." But then,

2. Christ is the resurrection of the holy law of God. The holy law of God was violated, broken, and trampled under foot; man had broken God's bands, and cast his cords from him; the authority of God's law was despised and disregarded;

but God will not let his law lie trampled under the feet of man. Well, Christ comes and repairs the honour of the law more than if it had never been broken, that it might not be a bar to our salvation; Is. xlii. 21: "He will magnify the law, and make it honourable." Thus, I say, he is the resurrection of the holy law; he vindicates the honour of the law, and puts a greater lustre and beauty upon it, than if man had continued in his primitive integrity. Yea, greater honour is done the law, than if all the angels in heaven had died; for though all the angels in heaven had obeyed its precepts, and endured its penalty in our room, they could never have done so much honour to it as Christ did, because he was the great Lawgiver, and was not a debtor to it like other men; Gal. iv. 4: "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." Here is a wonder, a wonder that will be matter of astonishment to all eternity; that he who gave the law was made under the law, to redeem us that were under it. So he is the resurrection of the law: "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh." Rom. viii. 3. But then, again,

3. In the *third* place, Christ is the resurrection of the primitive integrity, purity, and beauty, of the human nature. Sirs, the nature of man was marred, the beauty of it was sullied by the fall; yea, the nature of man was so polluted, and so ugly, by the fall, that it was sunk, as it were, below the very inferior creatures; but Christ is the resurrection of the human nature. By uniting our nature to himself, he raised it to a higher degree of honour than ever it had when it stood in the first Adam. Yea, sirs, the nature of man is advanced to a great honour, by being united to the Son of God, than ever was put upon the angelic nature. The angelic nature was never brought so near to God as the human nature; the angels are nigh his face, and happy in the enjoyment of God: but there are none of the angels that are united to any of the persons of the Trinity. The nature of man is so closely united to the person of the Son, as that it becomes one person with him. O come see what God hath wrought, to what God hath advanced us: "For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee?" Christ is called "the glory of his people Israel," and all his people are called to glory in him; and well may they, for he is the ornament of the family, he is the credit of the family. The crown fell from our heads when we sinned against God. Well, but by the incarnation of the Son of God, the crown is set upon the head of the human nature; and,

whenever we look to Christ, we should call him our crown, our ornament, our honour, and our beauty. Sirs, when people have a great man for their relation, they are very ready to tell it, Such a great man is my friend; but let not your boasting be in human things, but let your boasting be, that your very nature is joined to the person of [God's] eternal Son. I wish I could be instrumental to bring people to right notions of the person of Christ; ignorance of Christ's person is the loss of all. What is Christ, but God wearing man's nature, coming, and dying, and rising again, and ascending up into heaven, and wearing our nature for ever, as a pledge of his love to us? God in our nature is a God to be believed in, to be trusted in, and rejoiced in. Is not this God an object of the highest delight, triumph, and obedience? So then, I say, he is the resurrection of the human nature. But then, again,

4. Christ is the resurrection of our knowledge of God, and acquaintance with God. Sirs, immediately upon the fall of man, he fell out of acquaintance with God, and lost all saving views of God: it was the happiness of man before the fall, he saw God's glory in the whole creation around him, and he never looked upon a creature in it, but he saw the glory of God sparkling in that creature; but when we fell, Satan just did with us as the Philistines did with Samson, he put out our eyes. Man by nature is born blind, but Christ is the recovery of our sight; Christ came to bring light and sight together to us. Christ is called "the Sun of righteousness, the bright and morning Star." Why? Because he brings the knowledge of God back to the fallen tribe of Adam. He came to discover the glory of his Father to the world: John i. 18: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." And, sirs, it is just the beginnings of everlasting life in the soul, when the soul begins to know a God in Christ, and takes up that discovery of God in the word: John xvii. 3: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." He is the resurrection of our knowledge that we lost in the first Adam. Again,

5. In the *fifth* place, Christ is the resurrection of our righteousness, and of our justification and acceptance before God. Immediately upon the fall of Adam, he lost his original righteousness; and righteousness was quite out of Adam's family, *there is none righteous* in the earth, *no, not one;* but he is the righteousness of it. We are told, Dan. ix., he "brings in an everlasting righteousness:" notice the expression, he *brings it in;* it was out of Adam's family, out of the earth, and Christ

brings it in, and he does it by his "obedience unto death;" hence is that blessed name he bears, Jer. xxiii. 6: "In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is his name whereby he shall be called, JEHOVAH-TSIDKENU," that is, "the Lord our righteousness."—"Surely, shall one say, in the Lord have I righteousness:" notice, it is *in the Lord;* it is not in ourselves, but in the Lord. He is "the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." And, 2 Cor. v. 21: "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." Does not that say, he is "the resurrection and the life" of our righteousness and acceptance before the infinite Lord, that had passed the sentence of condemnation upon us, for our unrighteousness? O sirs! take care that you be under that covering of Christ's righteousness; you that are going to a communion-table, you had need to wrap your souls in that garb, for there is no standing before God without it. But, again,

6. He is the resurrection of our holiness. That was another part of God's image we lost; for you know it consists in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. Immediately after man's sin, he fell among the pots, and became black like an Ethiopian, and spotted like a leopard. Well, Christ comes, and he begins his work of holiness here, and perfects it at death; hence we are told, he is "made of God unto us sanctification." I do not understand that holiness which is without Christ; some pretend to make themselves holy by their own power, they put heathenish morality in the room of gospel-holiness: but that is not holiness; "for," says Christ, "without me ye can do nothing;" you cannot bring forth the fruits of holiness; unless you be joined to the Lord, you cannot be holy; it is "the beauty of the Lord" upon his people that makes them holy. Therefore, he is the resurrection of our holiness, if ever we were made holy. Again,

7. In the *seventh* place, Christ is the resurrection of our peace with God. By the entry of sin, our peace with God was broken, and man became an enemy to God, and ever since is filled with "enmity against God;" and God becomes an enemy to man, for "he is angry with the wicked every day." Well, Christ came to recover the ancient friendship between God and man, and by him it is effectually done; for he "makes peace by the blood of his cross," by the satisfaction of justice, and abolishing the penalty of the law; and the peace he makes between God and the soul, is a lasting peace, because it stands on a lasting foundation. There are some that make a mighty cry for peace, peace; O let us have peace at any rate, though it should be at the expense of truth, though

the truth should suffer by it: but it is folly for any to think, that peace can be, unless it stand upon righteousness and truth. No, the peace that Christ hath raised up, stands upon the solid bottom of a law-magnifying righteousness. He is the resurrection of our peace. And then,

8. He is the resurrection, not only of peace and friendship, but of fellowship and communion between God and man. When man sinned, you know he was banished by God, he was turned out of paradise, and the cherubims set to guard the way to "the tree of life;" there was no access for man to God, and God would have no correspondence with him; and what correspondence can there be between heaven and hell, guiltiness and righteousness? Well, Christ recovers this, for he himself is the way to it; for he tells us, John xiv. 6: "I am the way, and the truth, and the life: no man cometh to the Father but by me." And John x. 9: "I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out, and find pasture;" that is to say, they shall have free access to God, and his soul shall be filled with the fatness of my house of mercy. Sirs, there are a good many of you designing for a communion-table; see that you go in by the right door: it is easy to get man's door, to get a token from men; but, depend upon it, you will infallibly eat and drink damnation to your own souls, if you do not enter by the door of Christ Jesus. It is impossible that we can take up the human nature, as the medium of communication to the divine nature, unless we see light in the Lord's light: however, it is in this way that we come to have communion and fellowship with God. He is the resurrection of our fellowship and communion with God; "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God," 1 Pet. iii. 18. Christ is God's way to us, and our way to God. Again,

9. Christ is the resurrection of all the graces of the Spirit. Adam lost his faith, he lost his love, he lost his hope, he lost his repentance, and he lost his obedience by the fall. But now, Christ is the resurrection of every one of these.—He is the resurrection of our faith, trust, and confidence in God, as a reconciled God in Christ. He reveals himself to us to be a God of love: whenever the man sees this, it begets in him faith towards God: Psal. xxxvi. 7: "How excellent is thy loving kindness, O God! therefore the sons of men put their trust under the shadow of thy wings." Christ is called "the Author and Finisher of faith." Sirs, if ever you got faith, it was just Christ that, by his word and Spirit, begot it in you: "By grace are ye saved, through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any

man should boast." Then he is the resurrection, not only of our faith, but of our love. Have you any spark of love to Father, Son, and Holy Ghost! Why, that spark of celestial fire comes from the heart of Christ; the Spirit takes the things of Christ, and shows them unto us; he takes a coal of love from the heart of Christ, and throws it into our hearts, and kindles it, and when he has kindled it, he preserves it by the continual breathings of the wind of his Spirit upon it: "He will not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax, until he has brought forth judgment unto truth."—Then he is the resurrection of our hope in God; "he died and rose again, that our faith and hope might be in God." Says the apostle Peter (speaking of the resurrection of our hope,) "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead," 1 Pet. i. 3. Immediately upon the fall of Adam, he lost his hope; therefore it was, he fled into the thickets of paradise, for God was a terror to him. When the sinner is out of Christ, if he saw his case, he would be a "Magor-Missabib, a terror to himself, and all about him," Jer. xx. 3: "But thou saidst, There is no hope. No, for I have loved strangers, and after them will I go." But whenever a sinner is "begotten again," he is "begotten to a lively hope:" he complies with that command, "Let Israel hope in the Lord." He is the resurrection of our hope. And then he is the resurrection of our repentance and remission of sins: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." And he is the resurrection of our new obedience. Man, upon the fall, as I was hinting already, threw off his obedience to God; but Christ brings him back again; he writes his law upon his heart, and "causes him to walk in his statutes, and keep his judgments, and do them," Ezek. xxxvi. 27. Christ is the commander of our obedience; the law is delivered to us in the hand of a Mediator; we "are not without law to God, but under the law to Christ," 1 Cor. ix. 21. Because the law is in the hand of Christ, therefore the law is called his law and his commandment; it was he that was in the midst of the angels when the law was delivered. Then he is not only the commander of our obedience, but the pattern of it; he not only gives the law, but casts a copy of new obedience to us; he fulfils it, to bring in everlasting righteousness for our justification; and he obeys it as a rule, that so we may be encouraged to walk after his example: "Learn of me," says Christ, "for I am meek and lowly; take my yoke upon you;" that is to say, the yoke of

my law: a yoke that was never worn is ready to gall the necks of beasts; but Christ wore this yoke, and made it easy to us, fulfilling it as a covenant, and obeying it as a rule, and as our pattern. And then it is in him that all our obedience is accepted of the Lord. You must not think any thing is accepted as it comes from you, or done by you; no, our persons are accepted in him, and our obedience is rewarded in him; our obedience, as it is a fruit of his own Spirit, and of his love and satisfaction, is accepted and rewarded of the Lord. It is a remarkable expression you have, 1 Cor. xv. 58: "Be ye steadfast and unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." There is a little word, that is little looked to, but the very hinge of religion lies in it: Are you "in the Lord" when you obey? Are you "in him as the true God, and eternal life?" Does all your obedience flow from being in him? Is all your strength and holiness derived from him? When you look for a reward of your obedience as done in your own persons, you just run back to the covenant of works, and quit the covenant of grace; but, depend upon it, it will never be rewarded in yourselves, but in the Lord, in the Redeemer. Take care, then, and see that ye be in him, or else you and your obedience will be found [worth nothing] in the end of the day.

I might tell you, that Christ is the resurrection both of soul and body.—He is the resurrection of the soul, that noble part of man: "The redemption of the soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever," as to any ransom man could give for his soul, Psal. xlix. 8. O sirs! Christ is the resurrection of the soul, because he is the Redeemer of the soul; and he hath redeemed it by a great ransom: "We are not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot?" And then he is not only the resurrection of the soul, by paying a price for it, but by application of that price in a day of power: why, we are raised up by virtue of his resurrection; when our souls are raised up to a life of fellowship and communion with God, it is "the Spirit of Christ" that does it. Then he is not only the resurrection of the soul, but also of the body. There is a word you have to this purpose, Is. xxvi. 19: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise: awake and sing, ye that dwell in the dust: for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." Sirs, they that die in Jesus, and sleep in Jesus, are said to be *his dead, Thy dead men shall live;* they are his *dead body*, yet they shall *arise and sing*, they *that dwell in the dust.* What way is it he will bring them up from

the grave? Whenever he comes from heaven, he will let down his dew, then they will spring up as flowers in the spring; "for thy dew is as the dew of herbs, and the earth shall cast out the dead." It has sometimes been pleasant to me, to think of the difference between the resurrection of the godly and the wicked. The wicked will be raised by a word of power: they have no connexion with Christ, they are the devil's prisoners in the grave; and the devil, as God's executioner, drags their souls immediately to hell: but the saints, when they die, they do not die in consequence of the penalty of the law, but because it is the pleasure of their glorious Head, that so he may bring them through death, the road he travelled before them, to the immediate enjoyment of himself; he lets them drop for awhile into the grave; but at the resurrection, the dew of his Spirit will fall upon them like a warm shower, and then they will spring up like the corn after a warm shower; then they shall sing in that day, "Lo, this is our God, we have waited for him, and he will save us: this is the Lord, we have waited for him, we will be glad and rejoice in his salvation," Is. xxv. 9. I shall only add to this, that the very same Spirit of Christ that quickened thee at conversion, will quicken thee at the last day. I will give you a word for this, which you have in Rom. viii. 11: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, dwell in you; he that raised up Christ from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies, by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Your mortal bodies shall be quickened by that self-same Spirit that quickened you in conversion, and holds you in life, and keeps you from returning to the generation of the dead. And thus much shall serve for the *third* head, of what Christ is the resurrection?

IV. The next thing was, to *inquire to what sort of life are we raised by him, who is* the resurrection and the life? But I choose to forbear this at present, and give way to another speaker. However, I may have occasion to speak upon it at greater length, ere this solemnity be over. The Lord bless his word.

CHRIST THE RESURRECTION, AND THE LIFE.

Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection and the life.—JOHN XI. 25.

THE THIRD SERMON ON THIS TEXT.

O THAT these words may be spoken effectually and efficaciously to all this company this day! O that they may come to every soul, to every individual person here, by the powerful energy of his Spirit, and say, *I am the resurrection, and the life!* There is life in the Son as the second Adam, to quicken the slain family of the first Adam, "The slain of the Lord are many in the valley of vision," many dry bones lying scattered about the grave's devouring mouth. Well, sirs, I come to make a proclamation of life to the dead, in the name of him who is *the life*, in the name of him who is *the resurrection and the life;* his words, "are spirit, and they are life;" and there is spirit and life in him, to quicken all this company. O hear, hear, hear the word of God, and your souls shall live; hear this word, and life shall enter in with it. The text itself was the doctrine. The method I proposed was,

I. In the *first* place, to inquire what may be imported in this amiable, this desirable title that Christ takes to himself, *the resurrection and the life?*

II. Of whom is he the resurrection and the life?

III. Of what is he the resurrection and the life?

IV. To what sort of life is he the resurrection?

V. How comes this about, or by what means is this effected, that he is the resurrection and the life to us?

VI. Why is he the resurrection and the life? And then,

VII. *Lastly*, Apply.

As to the *first* of these, I spoke to it upon Saturday evening. I touched a little on the *second* and *third* heads yesterday. I showed to whom Christ is the resurrection and the life. To this I answered, (1.) That he is not the resurrection and the life to fallen angels; but he is the resurrection and the life to fallen man. (2.) He is not the resurrection of the Jews only, but the resurrection of the Gentiles also, that were *afar off*. Says the Father to Christ, "It is but a light thing

that thou shouldst be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel:" but he "gave him also to be a light to enlighten the Gentiles," to us poor Gentiles that lay in darkness many thousands of years. And then, (3.) Christ is the resurrection of churches. (4.) He is the resurrection of every individual sinner in the day of conversion and believing. And then, *lastly*, Christ is the resurrection of languishing saints and believers.

The *third* general head I touched was, Of what is he the resurrection? To this I answered in a good many particulars. 1*st*, He is the resurrection of God's declarative glory in this lower world. His glory was obscured by the sin of man, until Christ illuminated the divine perfections to greater advantage than they were before they were darkened by the sin of man.—He is the resurrection of the holy law that was broken all to pieces, as it were; for "he magnifies the law, and makes it honourable;" and the Lord is so well pleased with his obedience to the law, that he proclaims himself to be a reconciled God in him.—Again, he is the resurrection of the human nature that was sunk below its original excellency. The crown fell from our heads in the first Adam, but O it is set up again on our heads in the second Adam; he himself is the crown on our head, he is the ornament of the human nature.—Again, he is the resurrection of all saving discoveries of God. None had known God after the fall, if "the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father," had not revealed him.—He is the resurrection of our righteousness. We lost our original righteousness in Adam; but he brings it in again into the world, he "brings in an everlasting righteousness." The righteousness of the first Adam was but short-lived, but the righteousness of the second Adam is everlasting, it will never fail.—He is the resurrection of our sonship. Adam was declared to be the son of God at his creation, but he lost it to himself and us; but the second Adam brings us back again to God's family, we have faith through him, we have adoption through him, we have sanctification through him; he is the resurrection of our sanctification, and if ever you were made holy, it is the Son of God that hath made you so by his Spirit.—He is the resurrection of our peace; he made reconciliation for our iniquities by his blood.—He is the resurrection of correspondence between God and us. All correspondence between God and us was broken up by the fall; but Christ brings us again into the presence of God, we have 'fellowship with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ."—He is the resurrection of all the graces of the Spirit in the soul. He is the resurrection of our faith; he is "the author and finisher of faith." He is the resurrection of our love; for

we had never loved him, nor any of Adam's family, if he had not first loved us. He is the resurrection of our hope: "We are begotten again," saith the apostle Peter, "unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." He is the resurrection of our repentance; for "him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." He is the resurrection of our obedience to God; he is the commander of our obedience, he is the pattern of our obedience, he is the strength of our obedience, and through him our obedience is accepted, and through him our obedience is rewarded. All these particulars I endeavoured to enlarge upon, therefore I have only named them now in a cursory way.

There is one thing I shall mention before I proceed, and that is, that Christ is the resurrection of a shattered and broken creation. No sooner had sin entered into the world, but the wrath of God came down, and the creation began to groan under the weight of wrath that sin had brought upon it. We read of the whole creation groaning on the account of sin; "Cursed is the ground for thy sake," says God to Adam; that curse is a dead weight upon the earth, it either has been reduced to its primitive nothing, or to its original chaos out of which it was at first formed. The eternal Son of God, seeing the wrath of his Father coming down upon this lower world, steps in and offers a ransom for it, saying, O Father, give me a remnant of the lost race of Adam for a possession: let the earth, and all that is in it, be mine, and upon the granting it to me, I promise to satisfy thy justice, to repair the honour of thy law and sovereignty, and to restore the disjointed creation to its primtive beauty and order. Upon this parole and promise, God the Father makes a gift of the whole creation to him, "all power in heaven and earth" is devolved upon him; he "gives him the heathen for an inheritance, and the ends of the earth for a possession; he gives him power over all flesh, and gives him to be head over all things to the church, which is his body;" and he hath a human body prepared for him, that he might be "the man of his right hand;" and, in the fulness of time, having put on the human nature, he, with the ransom of his blood, buys the visible creation; he buys the elect as a seed to serve him; he buys this earth as a theatre; he buys the wicked world as tools to serve his purpose of grace with respect to an elect world, and, when he has served himself of them, he casts them away into the fire of hell. Thus Christ is the resurrection and the life of a shattered creation; and, if it were not kept up by his power, it would sink to nothing, or sink down into hell under the

load of God's wrath; and whenever Christ has finished what he designed, he will take it and purge it from sin that had defiled it; then he will erect "a new heaven and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." But I shall not insist farther on this head. I go on to,

IV. The *fourth* head I proposed in the general prosecution of the doctrine, which was, to *inquire to what life it is we are raised up by him who is* the resurrection and the life? In answer to this, I give you the following properties of that life we are raised to by him who is *the resurrection and the life*:—

1. It is a soul-life, it is a spiritual life. Alas for it, sirs! there are many dead souls among us in living bodies. Many have the appearance of life, but their souls are dead; they are walking up and down the world as so many statues, "dead in trespasses and sins." But that moment the soul comes to Jesus, the soul comes to live, "Hear, and your souls shall live," Is. lv. 3. What a valuable life is the life of the soul, in comparison of the body! Indeed, the generality make a greater account of their bodies than they do of their souls; they sell their souls to the devil, in pampering their bodies, which will shortly moulder down to the dust. "What will it profit a man," says our Saviour, "though he should gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what can a man give in exchange for his soul?" O what a valuable thing is the soul! O come to him who is *the resurrection and the life:* "Hear, and your souls shall live." Again,

2. It is a righteous life, even in the eye of the law of God, that is bestowed by him who is *the resurrection and the life.* In some sense it may be called a legal life, a law-life in regard there is no injury done to the law, in bestowing this life upon the dead sinner. As you heard, the Son of God became *the resurrection and the life*, by "magnifying the law, and making it honourable." The believer who is made alive by Christ, can stand the trial of the law, and look it in the face, and say, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth: who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." And then,

3. It is a holy life that springs from him who is *the resurrection and the life.* Christ himself is holy, *the holy One;* and whenever he takes a gripe of the sinner, he makes him "free from the law of sin and death;" he makes the creature that was "lying among the pots, to be like the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold;" and then the beauty of holiness is upon that soul. And then,

4. (As you were hearing in the former discourse,) It is a very humble and self-denied life they have from Christ. They live, but they will not venture to say they live. "I live," says the apostle, "but not I, but Christ that liveth in me." "Not I, but the grace of God in me." Hence it follows,

5. In the *fifth* place, It is a life of faith; for when a man gets the life of grace, he does not live upon that life, it is but like a drop of water cast into a vessel, it is soon spent, but he lives upon the fountain of grace. Believer, the fountain of life is not within thee, it is above thee, and it is without thee; it is in Christ Jesus. "Your life is hid with Christ in God," for, says Paul, Gal. ii. 20, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." And what follows? "The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God." Faith does not glory in any thing the man has received; no, faith, as it were, forgets what it received, but it reaches forward, and it always comes back to the fountain of life, to draw water there: "With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation," Is. xii. 3. So that, I say, it is a life of faith. Hence it follows,

6. It is a life of love. Whenever life enters into the sinner, he begins to love the Lord and his word: "O how love I thy law! it is my meditation all the day." And as the sparks fly upward, so this love is ever casting its sparks toward heaven: "Whom, having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory," 1 Pet. i. 8. And this makes it,

7. A life of joy and pleasure: "Whom, having not seen, ye love," &c.; "believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable, and full of glory." Some, who are unacquainted with religion, have a notion, that it is a dull and melancholy life; and therefore they stand aloof from it; and I wish believers may not give them too much occasion. If you see any of the saints dull and melancholy, it is not a part of their religion, but it is rather their irreligion, and their unacquaintedness with the Lord; it is their failing and infirmity; but when faith is set at work, it has "a joy that no man can take from them." You that have joy, and know nothing of this, your joy is "like the crackling of thorns under a pot," like a bundle of straw, which makes a blaze, that soon goes out: but this is a joy that never totally nor finally perishes, "floods of water will not be able to quench it;" every blink of the Lord's countenance makes the heart so glad, that corn and wine are but [dregs] and sand in comparison of it. O it is a joyful life! And then,

8. The life we have from him that is *the resurrection and the life*, it is a royal life, it is a princely life. He does not creep, as the men of the world do, to whom the serpent's curse

cleaves; by nature the seed of the serpent lie grovelling in the dust; when they see a man attending on fast-days and on feast-days, they will laugh at him, as if they were the only happy men in the world, while, in the mean time, they are "feeding on ashes," and are dancing about the mouth of "the pit." This life is a royal and princely life, and it is a life that makes the man live like himself; he hath a princely life when he "lives by faith on the Son of God, he lives on the hidden manna that most are strangers to; he makes them kings and priests to God and his Father;" he provides them with royal food, he provides for them a royal crown, kingdom, and sceptre, to "rule the nations," as the expression is, Rev. ii. 27. And then,

9. **To crown all, the life** we have from him, is an everlasting life. Sirs, Adam's life was but short-lived, and our own lives, what are they but a vapour and a shadow? and, ere long, you and I, that are looking one another in the face, will disappear, and our posterity, springing up will say in a little time, Where are they? But this life we have from him that is *the resurrection and the life;* it is a perpetual life, and a durable life; it is an everlasting life: "He that believeth on the Son of God, hath everlasting life." And when the life of grace resolves into glory, the soul comes to the communion of likeness, and the communion of everlasting pleasure with the Lord: "In thy presence is fulness of joy, and at thy right hand there are pleasures for evermore." So much for the *fourth* thing I proposed in the method.

V. The *fifth* thing was, *How this comes about? how Christ comes to be* the resurrection and the life *to dead sinners of Adam's family?*

1. It comes about by the ordination of his Father's appointment; for he "was set up from the beginning" to be our resurrection and the life; he was fore-ordained to it "before the foundation of the world was laid." And,

2. It comes about by his own voluntary susception and undertaking in the council of peace: "Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me: I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart." As if the Father had said to the Son, Yonder are a company, a lost company, of sinners of Adam's family; I will make a present of them to thee, providing thou wilt undertake to lay down thy life for them. Content, Father, says the Son, I put my name in the volume of thy book, I am willing this my engagement be registered, my blood shall go for theirs. And thereupon he becomes the resurrection and the life to us. Then,

3. He is the resurrection and the life by his incarnation;

he links our nature as it were to his own. He became one of our tribe, for he was none of ours originally; he took upon him the human nature, that so he might be in a capacity to bear the curse of the law, and to satisfy justice for us; of necessity it behooved him to be our near Kinsman, or else, he could not be our Redeemer. As under the law, he that was the avenger of our blood, and he that was to redeem the mortgaged inheritance, behooved to be the nearest of kin; so Christ, before he could be the Avenger of our blood, and bruise the head of the enemy, and before he could relieve the mortgaged inheritance of everlasting life, behooved to become our Kinsman. Let us pride ourselves in this Kinsman, in this Lord Immanuel alone. And then,

4. He becomes the resurrection and the life to us by his death and satisfaction. Sirs, our life springs out of the very death and blood of the Son of God; his humiliation is the root of our exaltation, and "by his stripes we are healed:" he was accounted among the "number of transgressors," that so we might be accounted *righteous* in the sight of God through him; he was *wounded*, that we might be *healed;* he was *smitten*, that we might *escape*. And then,

5. He becomes the resurrection and the life by his own personal resurrection from the dead; he goes down to the grave, that he might conquer the king of terrors within his own territories. Sirs, what was the great plot the devil had in tempting man to sin? Why, he knew sin would usher in death, and he knew that would usher in hell; for death is the very mouth of hell to all mankind. Well, when death is brought in, when the penalty of the law is incurred, and the faithfulness of God is engaged for man's destruction, what way must he be delivered? What, says the Son of God, let their curse be upon me, let me go down to the grave for them; I will wring the keys of death and hell out of the devil's hand; and thus I will make death the gate of heaven instead of hell. By his resurrection we are "begotten to a lively hope." And then,

6. He becomes the resurrection and the life to us, by his representation of us in heaven, and by negotiating our affairs in that high court. Sirs, all our concerns are transacted in the high court of heaven, our affairs of death or life are all negotiated above. Well, Christ takes on our nature, he dies, he goes down to the grave, rises again, and ascends into heaven; and he goes there to transact our affairs, to see that nothing be done against us; we are "raised up, and sit together with him in heavenly places." By virtue of Christ's sitting in heaven, believers, you are sitting there in him, just as subjects sit in parliament, in their representatives. He is our

living head, which is more than a bare representative. And then,

7. He is the resurrection and the life by the power and efficacy of his word. The word is sometimes called "the rod of the Mediator's strength;" and, when he sends it forth, he makes a living and a willing people in a day of power; he utters a word like that to Lazarus when lying in the grave, *Come forth:* then the bands and fetters of spiritual death drop off. Thus he is the resurrection and the life by the power of his word, for his word is a word of life; "to preach all the words of this life," says the Lord to the apostles, when they were brought out of prison: "The hour is coming," says Christ, "and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God: and they that hear shall live." And then,

Lastly, He is the resurrection by the efficacy of his Spirit: "The law of the Spirit of life, in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death," says the apostle, Rom. viii. 2.

VI. The *sixth* thing I proposed in the method was, to *inquire why he becomes the resurrection and the life to us?* I shall not insist on this; only in so many words, that I may hasten forward to the application.

1. He became our resurrection and the life, because he loved us: "Christ loved us, and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour," that he might be our resurrection and the life, Eph. v. 2. Then,

2. He becomes the resurrection and the life to us, because we were gifted of the Father to him; and he hath such a regard to the Father's gift, that he will die before he lose it. Again,

3. He does it for the manifestation of his own and his Father's glory, that he might bring men back to their chief end, for which they were created; man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him for ever. Man, when he fell, dishonoured God, instead of glorifying God. Well, Christ's design is to bring man back to God, to answer the end for which he had a being; and until Christ bestow this spiritual life upon him, he can neither glorify God here, nor enjoy him hereafter; but the believer begins even here to aspire after it, with the psalmist; "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." But I pass this, and go on to,

VII. The *Application.* And what use I intend, shall be comprised in the following *inferences:*

1. Then, From this doctrine believers are led back to their first original, and have it discovered to them from whence they sprung. Why believers, you are among the generation of the dead, before he that is *the resurrection and the life* paid you a visit. It were much for the advantage of believers, to be recollecting, and looking back to the state from whence they sprung. I remember, God taught Israel to sing in the wilderness, when they came to offer up their first-fruits to him: "A Syrian ready to perish was my father, and he went down into Egypt, and sojourned there with a few, and became there a nation, great, mighty, and populous," Deut. xxvi. 5. And God by Ezekiel tells them what they were before he visited them; "As for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born, thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee: thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these things unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the loathing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born," Ezek. xvi. 4, 5. Remember, believers, what you were, and what you are; and remember, it is only him that is the resurrection and the life that brought you to any thing you are. But again,

2. From this doctrine we may see what a blessing Christ is to a lost world, to a world of mankind sinners, "dead in trespasses and sins;" Christ is become *the resurrection and the life* to them; "I have laid help," says the Lord, "upon one that is mighty." "Men shall be blessed in him; and all nations shall call him blessed." O what a wretched condition had we been in this day, if Christ had not come into the world to save us! we had continued among the generation of the dead, if he had not paid us a visit: "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help." But again,

3. We may see, what dignified, what happy and excellent persons believers are. I remember Solomon says, that "a living dog is better than a dead lion." As one living man is better than all the race of men lying in the grave; so one living saint, who has got life from him that is *the resurrection and the life*, is better than a whole nation of dead men and women lying under the curse of God. O to what a sad pass are we come in the judicatories of the church of Scotland, when there is no difference made between the dead and the living! A dead man, if he have a gold ring, will [have more influence] in the election of a minister, than a living saint, because he wants earthly heritage; it is an earthly church when it is so. Alas! a church is come to a sad pass, when we judge of persons, not according to their relation to Christ, but according to their earthly possessions. Christ says, his "kingdom is not of this world," but the judicatories will have

it to be of this world; "Christ has chosen the poor of this world," but they choose the rich of this world to be heirs of his kingdom. Do such judicatories deserve the name of being the courts of Christ? But again,

4. We may see the difference between the first and the second Adam. The first Adam is the spring of death to all his posterity; the second Adam is a spring of life to all his posterity; the first Adam was the head of the covenant of works, the second is the head of the covenant of grace; the first Adam represented all his natural posterity, the second Adam represents all his spiritual posterity; the first Adam sends the curse of the law, and the curse of God along with it, to them, and the second Adam sends all spiritual blessings and mercies to his posterity for evermore. O what a difference is there between these two! The first Adam was a creature, but the second Adam is God-man, God manifested in the flesh. But then, again,

5. From this doctrine we may see the intimacy and closeness of the union between Christ and his members: why, this is implied in the expression, *I am the resurrection and the life.* One would think he is taking in only himself, but he takes in all believers; it is a relative word, it has a relation to those that are dead in trespasses and sins: "You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins;" that is, all that believe in Christ; "He that hath the Son, hath life." That connexion between Christ and his members is very close; there is a blessed oneness between him and them; he and they have but one Father, he is the Son by eternal generation, and they are sons by regeneration; he and they under one decree; he as head of the election, and they elected in him before the world began; he and they included in one bond; they have one and the same Spirit; the same Spirit that is in the head is in all the members. O what a blessed oneness is between Christ and them? "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one;" they are one in nature, and they are one in law, and they are comprised in one marriage-covenant: "He that is joined to the Lord, is one spirit." But then,

6. We may see the reason of that similitude and likeness that believers bear to Christ: they are more like Christ than all the rest of mankind; they are his living pictures and representatives upon earth; they carry his name upon their foreheads, so as every one may know him in them. What is the reason of this similitude and resemblance? Why, the reason is, he is their resurrection and life; the same life that is in the head is in the members; the same sap that is in the root is in the branches and little twigs; the same Spirit of life that is in Christ goes through all the members of his mystical

body; that is the reason of the similitude between him and them. And then,

7. In the *seventh* place, from this doctrine we may likewise see the ground and reason of the perseverance of the saints, and the recovery of believers from their dismal fits of unbelief they fall under. Why, what is it that makes the righteous grow stronger and stronger? What is it that recovers the believer from those desperate fits of unbelief, which make him to cry, "I am cast out of thy sight, I am free among the dead; my bones are withered, my life is gone;" yet he reverts always. What is it that brings him back, and restores his soul? Why, Christ is *the resurrection and the life*, a new stream of life comes from his glorious Head, and then he begins to "revive as the corn, grow as the vine, and his scent is as the wine of Lebanon. They that dwell under his shadow, who is the resurrection and the life, they shall revive as the corn," &c. Again,

8. In the *eighth* place, from this doctrine we may see where our eyes should be turned, in such a day as this, in order to the resurrection of a dying church. There is a melancholy complaint at this day through the land, of dead ministers and dead people, dead ordinances, dead hearing, dead reading, dead praying, and dead sacraments; where shall we go for help? Let us look to him who is *the resurrection and the life;* it is he only that is the resurrection of ministers, the resurrection of judicatories, the resurrection of doctrine, the resurrection of discipline, and the resurrection of government; he is the resurrection and the life of them all; if he would come back, we would "look forth as the morning, be fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners." I remember Jehoshaphat, in a perplexing time, when he was troubled, and knew not what to do, turns his eyes to the Lord, and cries, "O our God, wilt not thou judge them? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us; neither know we what to do, but our eyes are upon thee." Well, sirs, when all things are like to turn to wreck and confusion, let us look to him who is *the resurrection and the life*, that he may raise us from the grave of apostacy and backsliding to which we are fallen; by the very breath of his mouth he will make them live; and if he but say to ministers, "Go prophesy upon these dead and dry bones," when ministers are saying, O! "how can these dry bones live?" immediately joint comes to joint, and sinew to sinew, and life enters into them, and a great army will stand up for the Lord. In the mean time, until he be pleased to come, let us ply the oar of duty at his command; let us put up the request of the church in a day like this, "Wilt thou

not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee? Awake, O north wind, and come, thou south, and blow upon our gardens, that the spices thereof may flow out." But again,

9. In the *ninth* place, if it be so that Christ is *the resurrection and the life*, then certainly it is matter of sad regret and lamentation, that there should be so many dead sinners, when Christ is presented to them in the everlasting gospel. Indeed, it is to be regretted, though the words of life be proclaimed, though the words of the Spirit of life are scattered, so few are quickened by them. What way does that appear? say you. I answer, it appears by many things, that there are a great multitude of dead sinners among us. It appears from the want of a right colour. O sirs, the pale and wan colour of death is staring out of countenance and conversation of the greatest part; there is little or nothing of the lively colour of true holiness among us, and the want of it is a sign of death. The want of appetite after food is another symptom of death. The bread of life, the everlasting gospel of Christ is nauseated and loathed, as the manna was by Israel. The preaching of a crucified Christ is foolishness to some, and a stumbling-block to the worldly wise: whatever reckoning such may make of themselves, God reckons them fools and dead men; God's wisdom is folly to them, and their wisdom is folly to the Lord. And then the want of motion is another sign of death. Indeed, the dead may be moved from without, by external force, but not from within; there is something of motion they may seem to have, in attending upon ordinances; but, O sirs, is it from a principle of spiritual life you attend upon these ordinances? is it from a desire to see him who is *the resurrection and the life*. O let us lament over the misery of the dead in the valley of vision; if it were possible to sound an alarm, and startle and awaken the dead that are before me; this, indeed, is God's work, who "quickeneth the dead, and calls things that are not as if they were;" however, by his appointment, we must use the mean. There are these few words I would say to the dead, if they would give ear and hear.

1*st*, The dead are loathsome to the living. You know whenever the soul departs from the body, it becomes loathsome, it corrupts, it stinks. Hence Abraham says concerncerning Sarah, when she was dead, "Bury my dead out of my sight," though he loved her well when she was alive. Sirs, you are loathsome, you are abhorred of the living God while out of Christ, and abhorred by all living saints: "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united."

2dly, As they are loathsome, so they are frightful. People are affrighted at seeing the dead; so believers are affrighted when in the society of the wicked, lest they be corrupted with their contagion: and, indeed, it is hard to be amongst the dead, and not to be infected by them, and not to be some way partakers of their sin. Then the dead must be buried, and cast into the grave; so, dead sinners, you must be buried. Where will you be buried? Your bodies will go to the worms, but your souls to hell. The Hebrew word, *Sheol*, signifies both the grave and hell, because the grave is the very mouth of hell to the wicked. "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." Consider this, O dead sinners; let this engage you to improve him that is *the resurrection and the life*. And this leads me to another inference, or use from the doctrine.

10. If it be so, that Christ is *the resurrection and the life* of a lost world, "dead in sin," then in the name of this great Lord, as one of his meanest heralds, I proclaim life to the dead. It would be in vain to speak to the dead, if it were not by order from him who "quickeneth the dead, and who calleth things that are not as though they were." Can the dead praise him? If God were giving me a commission to speak to the very stones in the field, I would do it, believing that the stones would live and praise him; and when the Jews were forbidding the people to praise Christ, he says, "If these should forbear, the very stones would cry out; for out of the stones can God raise up children to Abraham." Sirs, you are not yet naturally dead, you are not eternally dead; therefore there is hope. O here is a living Saviour; here is the fountain of life among you; I cry, "Whosoever will, let him come, and take of the water of life: O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord." Comply with the word of the King eternal and immortal; it is his voice coming through an earthen trumpet, "that the excellency of the power may be of him." O that this may be the hour "wherein the dead may hear the voice of the Son of God, and live." O sirs, you are reasonable men and women, you have rational faculties; will you consider,

1*st*, That this very name of Christ invites you to come to him. Why has he taken this name to himself, *the resurrection, and the life*, if there were not dead sinners to quicken? Why has he registered it in his word, but that the dead sinner may lay his finger on that name, and carry it to a throne of grace, saying, O let him be *the resurrection and the life* to me? O let the Spirit of him that is *the resurrection and the life* quicken me, and make "me free from the law of sin and death!"

2dly, Consider he who is *the resurrection and the life* is given to you in the dispensation and grant of the everlasting gospel; the life that is in him is yours. Now I scarce think you will believe me; I affirm it, he is yours in the revelation; he is yours as he is held out in the Bible, the book of God; he is yours as he stands in this gospel; and he is yours in the gift and grant made by himself in the word. There is an authentic grant made by the Father of Christ, in this Bible; and this is the ground of the commission we have to preach to every creature. All mankind, every creature come of Adam, is dead in sin; and yet we are commissioned to go and preach and prophesy to these dead and dry bones. Now, upon what ground does this commission go? Why, you will see, from 1 John v. 11, that it goes upon a gift or grant of life that God has made to mankind-sinners, in a second Adam, a new covenant head: "This is the record of God, that God hath given to us," sinners of Adam's race, "eternal life, and this life is in his Son:" and our preaching the gospel is just a publication of this authentic grant of life to the dead, made by God in the word; when the dead *hear* this, their *souls live*, Is. lv. 3. I remember, in John vi., Christ *the resurrection, and the life*, is there preaching to dead sinners; because he had fed them with loaves, they had a hankering after him; they all forsook him when he began to preach faith in his blood to them; yet what says he, ver. 32:—"My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. The manna was given to Israel in the wilderness; every man in the camp of Israel had a right to it, because God gave it to them, and brought it to them, and brought it down from heaven to their tent-doors. Well, says Christ, "I am the bread of life," the true manna, I am given by my Father, that "whosoever eateth me, may live by me." The gift or grant of Christ in the word is just the very foundation that faith goes upon. Why, we durst not bid you meddle with him unless he were given. It is theft and robbery to meddle with that which does not belong to us. Our offer of Christ, and the call to receive him, certainly suppose he is given, or else we durst not bid you meddle with him. Unbelief is the great sin of the hearers of the gospel, that the Lord threatens most to resent; but unbelief would not be your sin, if Christ were not given. Now, believe this, that Christ is given, offered, and presented in this gospel, even to you who are rotting in the grave of sin, that he may, through faith of God's operation, be the resurrection and the life to your souls in particular. Then,

3dly, Consider that Christ, *the resurrection and the life*, is willing to give the life that is in him to you; he willingly died, he willingly came into this world, and he willingly went

about the work his Father sent him to do. What way does that appear? say you. *Answ.* It appears from his solemn and repeated calls, "Hear, and your souls shall live;" and he offers and bodes himself upon the dead, and complains that the dead will not come to him for life, John v. 40: "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life. How often would I have gathered you," says Christ, "as a hen gathers her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!" So then, remember, sirs, it is not your impotency that will excuse you; some people fancy, that it will excuse them, because they are dead; remember, sirs, that God will not condemn you so much for your impotency, as for your unwillingness to come to Christ: if you had willingness, you would find the Spirit of life entering into you, and quickening you; he is so willing, that he complains of the folly and distraction of sinners, he appeals to the heavens and the earth to judge betwixt him and them for their madness, Jer. ii. 12, 13: "Be astonished, O ye heavens, at this, and be horribly afraid; be very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have committed two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns, broken cisterns, that can hold no water." Now, let these things be pondered by you that are dead; the Lord is willing to give life to you, and will you not be willing to take such an unspeakable blessing of his hand? For the Lord's sake consider what will follow if you do not embrace the Son of God; out of one death you will go to another, out of the grave of sin you will be tumbled into the grave of hell ere it be long; it is only "those that hear the voice of the Son of God" that "shall live." O, say you, will you give the dead your best advice what to do?

(1.) Be convinced that you are dead in trespasses and sins. Alas! there lies the great difficulty, sinners cannot be persuaded but they have life already, at least as much of it as will bring them into heaven. We cannot get people beat out of this delusion.

(2.) Another advice I would give you is, Be persuaded there is no life in and by the works of the law for you: "By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." And then you must be persuaded, that there is life in Christ for you, and that you in particular are warranted to come to him for life.

(3.) Hearken to the words that come from him, listen to his words of life, for in hearing you shall live. I would advise you to pray much. Let the dead go to a living Christ; cry, Spring up, O well of living water, and enter into my soul. Then let those that are dead [frequent] the company of living Christians; for this is one way to get life, and to

keep it in when got: as you know, when dead coals are put in among the living coals, they will soon be kindled by them; so, by conversing with lively Christians, the Spirit of life may enter into you.

11. The *last* inference I make is to the living. Is it so, that Christ is *the resurrection and the life?* Then you that are raised by his death and resurrection, take these advices following, and so I have done. (I fear I have insisted too long already.)

1*st*, My advice to you that are partakers of the life of Christ, is, to bless the Lord that ever he crowned you with loving-kindness and tender mercies. Admire the freedom of the grace of God, in quickening you when "dead in trespasses and sins," when he left others dead in the grave of sin. The Lord comes to the quarry of nature, he sees so many stones lying there, and he pitches on whom he pleases: have you not reason, then, to bless the Lord, that he picked you out, and left many of brighter natural qualifications than you? O man, what is the difference between them and you? It is nothing but sovereign, free, and victorious grace. Let grace have all the glory. But then,

2*dly*, Another advice I would give you that have shared of life from him that is *the resurrection and the life*, is this: Has he quickened you? let the life you live, be "by faith upon the Son of God, who loved you, and gave himself for you." Remember what I said before, you are not to live on grace received, but the life that is in him: "The life I live," says the apostle, "is by faith upon the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." And then as you live upon him, and by him, so study to live to his glory: "Let your light so shine before men, that others, seeing your good works, may glorify your Father which is in heaven." And then,

3*dly*, Another advice I would give to the living, is, Study not only to believe in him with the heart, but to confess him with the mouth to salvation, as the expression is, Rom. x. 10: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." It is not enough to believe in Christ, unless we likewise own and avow him, unless we honour and glorify him before the world: "Him that confesseth me before men," saith Christ, "him will I confess before my Father and his holy angels; but he that denieth me before men, him will I also deny before my Father and his holy angels." I remember Is. xliii. 10, and xliv. 8, Christians are called the Lord's *witnesses*. Why do they get that name? Because they confess his truths, they confess his cause, they confess his members, they confess his ministers, and every thing that belongs to him. It is not a

private owning of him that will do in such a day as this; he is publicly affronted, the crown is publicly taken off his head; he is injured by civil and ecclesiastical courts; he is injured in his doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; he is injured in his members; he is injured in his supreme Deity; he is injured in his headship and sovereignty over his church. Now, I say, when he is thus publicly injured, he ought also to be publicly confessed. A public testimony has been emitted, in a judicial way, by a handful of ministers, who, by the peculiar providence of God, have been brought into a particular situation; that testimony has come abroad, and it "torments the men that dwell upon the earth," who attempt to bury his testimony, and to bury his witnesses. A cry is come abroad, of a dangerous schism in the church, and of schismatics rending the seamless coat of Christ. This is just the old cant of the Papists, when the Protestants came off from them, saying, O, by your doing so, you cause divisions in the church, and rend Christ's seamless coat. I would ask such, Who are the causes of it? whether they that endeavour to maintain, and contend for the truths of Christ; or those that tread his truths under their feet? whether they that endeavour to maintain "the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free," or those that are trampling the sacred privileges of the church of Christ under their feet? All that is demanded by us is, that they return to the Lord, and that they rectify these things that are wrong in doctrine, worship, discipline, and government; this is what God requires, he "commands all men every where to repent." What is the reason that men, in a judicial capacity, do not purge out the leaven of error or scandals in the church? what is the reason? It is either because they will not, or they cannot. If they will not, by this they proclaim to the world, that they are a set of wicked men: or it is because they cannot, and it says the Master has taken away the keys from them; and what a ridiculous thing would it be to accede to them, from whom the keys of the house are taken away by the Master of the house? It is easy, then, to know what course to steer. If the rights of Christ, as King in his holy hill of Zion, be maintained in the judicatories of the establishment, then it is a sin to withdraw from them: but if they be trampling under foot the authority of the Son of God, by enacting laws in his house which are inconsistent with his laws, and with the liberties wherewith he has made his people free; if they be worming out a faithful ministry, screening the erroneous, casting ministers out of their communion for faithfully witnessing against errors and corruptions; then we ought not to continue with them, especially when a public testimony is lifted up. Wherever

his cause is displayed, and his truths are maintained by doctrine, worship, or discipline, there should the accession be; for the "gathering of the people" should be there. If it be within the camp, stand there; if it be found in "the fields, and city of the wood," it concerns us to follow him there, though reproach and persecution should follow; says the apostle, Heb. xiii. 13: "Let us go forth, therefore, unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach." When the Christian church was first erected by the apostles, and the Jewish church was unhinged, a cry was raised after them, that they were schismatics, and rending the true and only church of God; says the apostle, He has been reproached for us, and it is good [in] common to go without the camp to him, bearing his reproach. However you may fear reproach for Christ, Moses was of another opinion; for he "accounted the reproach of Christ greater riches than all the treasures of Egypt." What is the hazard, though reproach should follow? Cleave to him. Let us study to confess him, and follow him on all hazards: "He that loses his life for my sake," says Christ, "shall find it;" he that loses a good name for Christ, will find it again; there will be a resurrection of names, as well as of persons, ere all be done. And then,

4*thly*, Another advice is, I would have you beware of those things that are a prejudice to the life of your souls. (1.) Beware of an indolent life. Nothing does more hurt a person's life than this; it is very prejudicial to the body. But O, beware of spiritual sloth; be "diligent in business, fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." (2.) Beware of surfeiting and glutting yourselves with the pleasures of sense: that also is a prejudice to the life of the soul: "Take heed," says our Saviour, "lest at any time ye be overcharged with surfeiting and drunkenness, and that day come upon you unawares." No sooner did Samson stoop into the lap of Delilah, than his locks were cut. Then, (3.) Beware of unwholesome food; why, it is pernicious to the life. O beware of unsound doctrines; many errors are abounding in our day. And O, beware of dead ministers; for dead ministers make a dead people and dead hearers. Where there is nothing but dead hearing, O will ever the voice of dead men make a living people? O beware of putting your souls under the inspection of a dead, ignorant, and erroneous ministry: beware of them: says Christ, "If the blind lead the blind, both will fall into the ditch." Beware of dumb ministers, that have not a mouth to open for Christ; beware of them, that, instead of barking at the wolves, are barking at the sheep. If you would keep life in your souls, study to keep under a lively ministry where you can find it. Then beware of a deadening society; for it

is very prejudicial to the soul: "Depart from me, all ye that are evil doers; for I will keep the commandments of my God." Beware of grieving the Spirit of the Lord; if you grieve him, he will depart, and then death will follow upon his departure; beware of resisting his motions and operations; beware of turning a deaf ear to his word, if it be disregarded, his Spirit will depart from you: "Wherefore," says the Lord, "I gave them up to their own hearts' lusts, and then they wandered in their own counsels." Beware of sinning presumptuously, for that kills and deadens the life of the gracious soul. Put up that prayer of David's, Psal. xix. 13: "Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous sins, let them not have dominion over me: then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent from the great transgression." Beware of security and barrenness under the means of grace; when you get influences from the Lord, O improve them for the end you got them; for when God's vineyard does not bring forth fruit at the watering of it, the Lord forbids the watering of it any more. The Lord bless his word.

END OF VOL. II.